2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Biblical Interpretation Series

Editors-in-Chief

Paul Anderson (*George Fox University*)
Jennifer L. Koosed (*Albright College, Reading*)

Editorial Board

A.K.M. Adam (*University of Oxford*)
Colleen M. Conway (*Seton Hall University*)
Nijay Gupta (*Portland Seminary*)
Amy Kalmanofsky (*Jewish Theological Seminary*)
Vernon Robbins (*Emory University*)
Annette Schellenberg (*Universität Wien*)
Johanna Stiebert (*University of Leeds*)
Duane Watson (*Malone University*)
Christine Roy Yoder (*Columbia Theological Seminary*)
Ruben Zimmermann (*Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz*)

VOLUME 174

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/bins*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective

Radboud Prestige Lectures by Jörg Frey

Edited by

Jörg Frey
Matthijs den Dulk
Jan G. van der Watt

BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

This volume is based on the *Radboud Prestige Lectures* delivered by Jörg Frey in Nijmegen in 2016. The *Radboud Prestige Lectures* provide a forum for cutting-edge research in New Testament and Early Christian Literature. The lectures are published by Brill Academic Publishers along with responses by scholars from all over the world. This unique format allows for in-depth discussion among leading scholarly voices.

Previous publications based on *Radboud Prestige Lectures* include:

- Alan Culpepper—*Creation Stories in Dialogue: The Bible, Science, and Folk Traditions* (edited by Alan Culpepper and Jan van der Watt), Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Pieter W. van der Horst—*Saxa judaica loquuntur: Lessons from Early Jewish Inscriptions*, Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Michael Wolter—*The Quest for the Real Jesus* (edited by Jan van der Watt), Leiden: Brill, 2013.

For more information about the *Radboud Prestige Lectures*, please visit https://www.ru.nl/theology/radboud-prestige-lectures/radboud-prestige-lectures/

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Frey, Jörg, editor.
Title: 2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter : towards a new perspective : Radboud prestige lectures by Jörg Frey / edited by Jörg Frey, Matthijs den Dulk, Jan G. van der Watt.
Other titles: Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter
Description: Boston : Brill, 2019. | Series: Biblical interpretation series, ISSN 0928-0731 ; volume 174 | "This volume is based on the Radboud prestige lectures delivered by Jörg Frey in Nijmegen in 2016"—ECIP t.p. verso. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2019010445 (print) | LCCN 2019016952 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004399549 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004390249 (hardback : alk. paper)
Subjects: LCSH: Bible. Peter, 2nd—Criticism, interpretation, etc. | Apocalypse of Peter (Greek-Ethiopic version)—Criticism, interpretation, etc.
Classification: LCC BS2795.52 (ebook) | LCC BS2795.52 .A13 2019 (print) | DDC 227/.9306—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2019010445

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 0928-0731
ISBN 978-90-04-39024-9 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-39954-9 (e-book)

Copyright 2019 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi, Brill Sense, Hotei Publishing, mentis Verlag, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh and Wilhelm Fink Verlag.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.
Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Contents

Contributors vii

1 Introduction: A Second Look at Second Peter 1
Matthijs den Dulk

2 Second Peter in New Perspective 7
Jörg Frey

3 The *Apocalypse of Peter* as the First Christian Martyr Text: Its Date, Provenance and Relationship with 2 Peter 75
Jan N. Bremmer

4 Petrus-Diskurse in Alexandria: Eine Fortführung der Gedanken von Jörg Frey 99
Tobias Nicklas

5 The Second Letter of Peter, Josephus and Gnosticism 128
Terrance Callan

6 2 Peter, the Johannine Epistles, and the Authority of "Eyewitness" Apostolic Tradition 147
David R. Nienhuis

7 Reading 2 Peter 3 in the Light of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Sibylline Oracles* 160
Jeremy Hultin

8 'In Aegyptum, ut denuo disseratur de me' 196
Martin G. Ruf

9 Does the *Apocalypse of Peter* Help to Determine the Date of 2 Peter? 217
Paul Foster

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

10 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* Revisited: A Response to Jörg Frey 261
Richard Bauckham

11 2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Concluding Reflections 282
Jörg Frey

Index of Ancient Sources 307
Index of Modern Authors 324

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Contributors

Richard Bauckham
(Ph.D., Cambridge) is Emeritus Professor of New Testament Studies and Bishop Wardlaw Professor in the School of Divinity, University of St. Andrews.

Jan Bremmer
(Ph.D., Leiden) is Emeritus Professor of Science of Religion and Comparative Religious Studies at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen.

Terrance Callan
(Ph.D., Yale) is Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies at the Athenaeum of Ohio.

Matthijs den Dulk
(Ph.D., Chicago) is Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Radboud University.

Paul Foster
(DPhil., Oxford) is Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity in the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh.

Jörg Frey
(Dr. theol., Dr. theol. habil., Tübingen) is Professor of New Testament Studies at the University of Zurich.

Jeremy F. Hultin
(Ph.D., Yale) is Visiting Associate Professor of Biblical Languages at Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

Tobias Nicklas
(Dr. theol., Regensburg) is Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Hermeneutics at the Fakultät für Katholische Theologie, Universität Regensburg and Research Associate at the Department of New Testament, University of the Free State, South Africa.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

David Nienhuis
(Ph.D., Aberdeen) is Professor of New Testament Studies at Seattle Pacific University.

Martin Ruf
(Ph.D., Utrecht) teaches classical languages at the Gemeentelijk Gymnasium Hilversum.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: A Second Look at Second Peter

Matthijs den Dulk

In 2015, Jörg Frey's commentary on 2 Peter and Jude was published in the *Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament* series.[1] This commentary results from many years of studying these intriguing early Christian texts and is one of many significant achievements in Frey's exceptionally fruitful career. The present volume arises out of a number of key insights Frey developed during his decade-long study of 2 Peter. In the next chapter, based on his Radboud Prestige Lectures delivered in Nijmegen in 2016, Frey presents a new perspective on 2 Peter that draws on these insights. In the chapters that follow, Frey's new perspective is discussed by eight specialists in the field, who respond to his proposal in ways both critical and constructive. The final chapter consists of Frey's rejoinder to these critiques.

Building on and extending the work of Wolfgang Grünstäudl,[2] the key contention of Frey's new perspective is that 2 Peter depends on the Greek (Ethiopic) *Apocalypse of Peter* (not to be confused with the Coptic document by the same name found at Nag Hammadi). Previous scholarship has also posited a literary relationship between the two documents but construed the direction of influence in the opposite direction. Richard Bauckham's work in particular convinced many that the *Apocalypse of Peter* postdates the canonical letter.[3] Frey sees the relationship between the canonical and the noncanonical

1 Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015). English translation: Jörg Frey, *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2018).

2 Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

3 See especially Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 290–303. Bauckham's many studies on the *Apocalypse of Peter* were instrumental in drawing attention to this previously somewhat neglected text. See, in addition to the study cited above, Richard J. Bauckham, "The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter," *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87; idem., "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50; idem., "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95; idem., "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160–258. (first published in *Apocrypha* 5 [1994]: 7–111; the 1998 version is cited

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_002
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

document differently and posits that the former is best understood in the light of the latter. Frey develops a range of arguments in support of this hypothesis and presents its implications for the interpretation of 2 Peter. He argues that reading 2 Peter against the backdrop of the *Apocalypse of Peter* allows for a better interpretation of various passages, including the announcement of Peter's impending death (1:13–15), the transfiguration pericope (1:16–18), and the eschatological scenario envisioned by 2 Peter (esp. in 3:3–13). In addition, this new perspective, which Frey further develops by positing an Alexandrian origin for the letter and situating it within a broader "Petrine discourse," also sheds new light on the letter's literary style, the occasion of its composition, and a long-standing text critical problem ([οὐχ] εὑρεθήσεται, 3:10).

In the first chapter following Frey's essay, Jan Bremmer draws attention to the importance of persecution and martyrdom in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The text is usually overlooked in discussions of ancient Christian martyrdom, but the *Apocalypse of Peter* offers a very early witness to martyrological terminology and concepts, including the "technical" use of the word *martyr*, intercession by martyrs, and the label "holy" used with reference to martyrs. This renders the question of the date and provenance of the *Apocalypse* particularly interesting. Moreover, as Bremmer notes at the beginning of his essay, these questions are also of great significance in light of Frey's argument about the direction of influence between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse* (a thesis accepted by Bremmer). After all, if the *Apocalypse of Peter* can be accurately dated and assigned a secure provenance, this will be helpful for reconstructing the historical context of 2 Peter. Bremmer argues for an Alexandrian provenance for the *Apocalypse of Peter* and a date around 150 CE on the basis of a variety of literary connections. This would make the *Apocalypse* the earliest Christian martyr text.

Tobias Nicklas likewise accepts the main lines of Frey's new perspective, which should occasion little surprise given that Frey's proposal draws in part on previous work by Nicklas and his student Wolfgang Grünstäudl. In "Petrus-Diskurse in Alexandria: Eine Fortführung der Gedanken von Jörg Frey," Nicklas builds on Frey's notion of a "Petrine discourse." Dismissing the notion of a Petrine school, Frey suggested that it would be better to think of the shared milieu and literary links between 2 Peter, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the

throughout this volume). More recently, the study of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has received important impetuses from a collection of essays edited by Jan Bremmer (*The Apocalypse of Peter*, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 [Leuven: Peeters, 2003]) and various publications by Tobias Nicklas, including a new edition of the Greek fragments edited by him and Thomas J. Kraus (*Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 [Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004]).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Kerygma of Peter in terms of a "Petrine discourse." Nicklas proposes adding to this cluster the Coptic *Apocalypse of Peter* from Nag Hammadi, which, like 2 Peter and the Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*, can be assigned an Egyptian, probably Alexandrian, provenance. In Nicklas's judgment, the Coptic *Apocalypse* is dependent on 2 Peter and belongs to the milieu of the Alexandrian teacher Basilides. This interconnected framework of texts which take Peter as the supreme apostolic authority and share many themes fits well with a number of traditions about early Alexandrian Christianity, including the story of its founding by Mark, the "interpreter" of Peter.

In "The Second Letter of Peter, Josephus and Gnosticism," Terrance Callan extends Frey's reconsideration of the literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* by revisiting two other possible connections, viz. between 2 Peter and Josephus and between 2 Peter and Gnostic traditions. These connections are generally rejected in contemporary scholarship, but Callan traces earlier scholarship to demonstrate that these issues have not been satisfactorily resolved. In his view, the evidence supports the argument made already in the late nineteenth century that 2 Peter drew on Josephus. Similarly, Callan suggests that the long-abandoned hypothesis of a Gnostic identity for the opponents of 2 Peter ought to be revived. More specifically, Callan supports the view that they were followers of Basilides. These proposed dependencies are compatible with the late date for 2 Peter championed by Frey, and the possible connection with Basilides conforms well with the Alexandrian provenance that Frey advocates.

The next chapter, David Nienhuis's "2 Peter, the Johannine Epistles, and the Authority of 'Eyewitness' Apostolic Tradition," develops Frey's argument by taking into account 2 Peter's position within the biblical canon. Nienhuis asks why this letter was accepted into the canon while the *Apocalypse of Peter* was not. He argues that the author of 2 Peter essentially wrote his text into the canon by presenting it as the companion piece to the already authoritative missive now known as 1 Peter, and by assuming an authoritative position vis-à-vis the Pauline letter collection (2 Pet 3:15–16). Moreover, Nienhuis contends that 2 Peter was written with the intent of linking 1 Peter to 1–3 John, which follow 2 Peter in the Catholic Epistle collection. Nienhuis deduces a wide range of parallels between 2 Peter and 1–3 John that functioned, he argues, to connect Petrine with Johannine discourse. By drawing on previous letters of Peter and John (as well as Jude), 2 Peter brought these various voices into a more coherent apostolic testimony.

Jeremy Hultin accepts Frey's view that the author of 2 Peter knew the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but questions key aspects of Frey's construal of *how* the former drew on the latter. Hultin's essay offers a detailed exegetical

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

engagement with Frey's interpretation of 2 Peter 3:5–13, a crucial passage in which the author responds to the "scoffers" who say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!" (3:4). Frey connects this with the death of Peter, which should have inaugurated the demise of the Roman Empire according to his reading of *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4. Hultin argues that the background of the scoffers' taunts is of a more fundamental kind: the idea that "all things" would *not* "continue as they were from the beginning of creation" and that God would at some point destroy his own creation was regarded by many in antiquity as implausible or even impious. According to Hultin, the purpose of this section of 2 Peter was therefore to defend the eschatological scenario in which the cosmos would cease to exist, and to do so in a way that would curtail questions about God's goodness and justness. In developing this reading of the text, Hultin proposes fresh interpretations of key elements of 2 Peter 3:4–13, including the sequence of the final events (Day of the Lord, conflagration, and the Day of God [3:10–12]), the meaning of the phrase "the earth and the works in it," and the text critical question of whether the earth and these "works" will or will *not* be found at the end ([οὐχ] εὑρεθήσεται [3:10]). While the differences with Frey's reading are substantial, Hultin arrives at many of his conclusions by building on Frey's theory with respect to the direction of influence between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse*, as well as by considering how the *Apocalypse* was used and adapted in other literature, especially in the *Sibylline Oracles*.

Martin Ruf's essay "*In Aegyptum, ut denuo disseratur de me*" takes a more expansive approach and addresses various key issues raised by Frey's work, including whether the pseudepigraphy of the letter was intended to be transparent to its addressees ("no" according to Ruf) and whether 2 Peter was meant to replace Jude ("yes," Ruf says). Arguably most important in the context of the present volume is the opening section of the essay, which questions Frey's (and Grünstäudl's) account of the literary connection between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse*. Ruf is skeptical about the possibility of determining any kind of direct literary connection. In Ruf's estimation there is a relationship between the two documents, but it is difficult to be more specific than to say that they are engaging in, and contributing to, the same "discourse." Even if the precise relationship remains unclear, given that there clearly is a connection between the two documents, the *Apocalypse of Peter* can shed light on the contents of 2 Peter. So, for instance, Ruf suggests that the *Apocalypse* offers support for interpreting "the fathers," mentioned in the taunt of the scoffers (2 Peter 3:4), as a reference to the patriarchs, rather than to the first generation of Jesus-followers.

The final two chapters of this volume are even more skeptical about Frey's thesis with respect to the dependency of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

first part of Paul Foster's essay "Does the *Apocalypse of Peter* Help to Determine the Date of 2 Peter?" considers previous scholarly discussions about the date of 2 Peter. In the second part, Foster turns to the role that 2 Peter's relation to the *Apocalypse of Peter* has played in previous discussions of the letter and its date, going all the way back to the first publications that addressed the issue shortly after the publication of the editio princeps of the *Apocalypse* in 1892. Having provided a historical framework for the present-day debate, the final section of Foster's essay systematically considers five key arguments that Frey has presented in favor of the dependency of 2 Peter on the Apocalypse. Foster finds all of them wanting. In his view, the evidentiary basis is too small and the inferences too logically precarious to support the weight of Frey's hypothesis. The *Apocalypse of Peter* accordingly cannot be of use in determining the date of 2 Peter.

In "2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* Revisited: A Response to Jörg Frey," Richard Bauckham returns to the relationship between the two documents for the first time since his important publications in the 1980s and 90s. Considering the evidence afresh so many years later, Bauckham comes to the conclusion that his hypothesis that the *Apocalypse* depended on 2 Peter needs emending. Bauckham does not, however, accept Frey's view that there is dependency in the opposite direction. He argues instead that the connections between the two texts are ultimately too limited to support a literary relationship. Bauckham now considers it more likely that the two documents are independent from each other.

In the final chapter, Jörg Frey responds to the preceding essays. He observes that it is to be expected that a fresh proposal such as the one developed in his Nijmegen lectures will be met with some opposition, which renders it all the more notable that many of the respondents accept much or even all of his "new perspective." Responding to Bauckham and Foster, the two contributors most critical of this hypothesis, Frey argues that many of the arguments he advanced may be inconclusive on their own and the verbal agreements between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse* limited, but that the cumulative weight of the parallels and the remarkable overlaps not necessarily on the verbal, but on the thematic level—and this despite the fragmentary nature of the *Apocalypse* and the considerable differences in genre and theology—mean that his hypothesis can withstand their criticism. The proof is in the proverbial pudding, Frey suggests, and the interpretive advances made possible by reading 2 Peter against the backdrop of the *Apocalypse of Peter* are therefore the clearest commendation of his approach. The potential for fresh insights into 2 Peter is clearly illustrated by the various suggestions developed in the chapters by those who (partly) accept Frey's perspective, a substantial number of which Frey believes to have considerable merit.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Given Bauckham's *retractatio*, the position that the *Apocalypse* is dependent on 2 Peter no longer finds support, at least not among the contributors to this volume. But beyond that there is much that remains up for debate, both in terms of the "big questions" about 2 Peter's character and provenance and with respect to many more detailed exegetical points. There can be no doubt, however, that Frey's proposal provides a major impetus to scholarship on this remarkable early Christian document as well as to the study of the equally fascinating *Apocalypse of Peter*.

Bibliography

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature." *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter." *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87.

Bremmer, Jan N., ed. *The Apocalypse of Peter*. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 2

Second Peter in New Perspective

Jörg Frey

In this three-part essay, originally delivered as the 2016 Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament,[1] I will present a 'new perspective' on a rather neglected and underestimated text from the margins of the New Testament, the Second Epistle of Peter. At the end of 2015, my commentary on Jude and 2 Peter was published in the series *Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament*,[2] and thus an interesting journey with these letters came to a preliminary end. When I commenced this project more than ten years ago, I had not expected how many problems I would encounter and where I would finally end up. Some earlier papers, delivered at conferences in South-Africa and Germany,[3] were not yet shaped by the insights I finally gained, in particular due to the dialogue with my friend and colleague Prof. Tobias Nicklas from Regensburg and a stimulating doctoral dissertation written under his

1 I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Jan van der Watt and Matthijs den Dulk for their hospitality and for the fruitful discussion of my lectures with colleagues and friends from the Netherlands and Belgium.

2 Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015). An extensive exposition of the text and more detailed references to sources and further secondary literature, which are not included in this essay, can be found in the commentary. An English translation of the commentary is available from Baylor University Press: Jörg Frey, *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*, trans. Kathleen Ess (Waco, Tex.: Baylor UP, 2018). A somewhat different version of a few sections of the present essay has previously been published in Jörg Frey, "Fire and Water? Apocalyptic Imagination and Hellenistic Worldview in 2 Peter," in *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, ed. Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, JSJSup 175 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 451–71.

3 Cf. Jörg Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, ed. Jörg Frey et al., WUNT 246 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 683–732; Jörg Frey, "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter," in *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, ed. Ruben Zimmermann, Jan G. van der Watt, and Susanne Luther, WUNT 2/296 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 275–310; Jörg Frey, "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 493–513.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_003

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

supervision by Wolfgang Grünstäudl.[4] Inspired by these conversations and numerous other works of recent scholarship, I began to understand 2 Peter and its literary and historical context from a perspective that markedly differs from the majority of previous commentaries and studies.

Of course, the term "new perspective" may be considered problematic, as the rhetoric of newness often promises more than it actually delivers, and from Pauline studies we see how 'new,' 'newer,' and 'newest' perspectives try to outdo each other. But since 2 Peter is not so much a focus of New Testament scholarship, I am confident that this will not be a danger in the present case, and that the 'new perspective' developed here will stimulate the debate on 2 Peter, Petrine literature more broadly, and the New Testament canon for a certain period of time.

In the first part of this essay, I will address the problems of 2 Peter's authorial fiction and literary relations, particularly its literary relationship with the *Apocalypse of Peter*. I will argue that 2 Peter reacts to this hitherto rather neglected 'apocryphal' text. If the texts are in fact connected, this offers a new intertextual and historical perspective that can explain a number of problems in 2 Peter, and affects the interpretation of this enigmatic letter. The second part of this essay will focus on the main topic of the letter—the problem of eschatology—which is not only discussed in 2 Peter 3 in terms of a cosmic conflagration, but also, in rather different terms, in 2 Peter 1:3–11, so that the issue of consistency must be discussed. I will try to demonstrate that the 'new perspective' on 2 Peter is particularly helpful for elucidating some of the riddles of its eschatology. The third part focuses on 2 Peter's ethics and the relationship between soteriology and ethics, which has so often provoked criticism of this writing. Finally, we will offer some concluding reflections on 2 Pet 3:15–16 and the relationship between "Peter" and Paul within the NT canon.

1 Second Peter, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and the 'Petrine Discourse': Towards a New Historical Perspective

1.1 *Scholarly Perspectives on 2 Peter*

Second Peter is still one of the most neglected and disputed writings of the New Testament. Edwin Abbott may be cited as an example of a common negative evaluation of 2 Peter: "This Epistle is not Christian in spirit, much

4 Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

less apostolically Christian."[5] A major reason for such harsh verdicts is the author's massive polemic against dissenting Christian teachers, who in an almost endless tirade are accused of arrogance, dishonesty, blindness, immorality, uncleanness as pigs and dogs, and, finally, destined for death and eternal darkness.[6] Another problematic aspect is the bold type of author-construction in 2 Peter.[7] The writing solemnly claims apostolic origins as a testament of "Symeon Petros" (2 Pet 1:1)[8] and emphasizes the author's eyewitness testimony of the transfiguration of Jesus (2 Pet 1:16–18). Critical scholarship, however, quite unanimously considers the letter to be a late pseudonymous composition,[9] written in a highly sophisticated style and adopting elements of Greek philosophical thought. Almost inevitably, then, questions arise: Is 2 Peter simply a fraudulent attempt to deceive its readers, and can such a bold pseudepigraphon still be considered a product of a genuine religious mind with theological authority? Some interpreters claim that if 2 Peter is so blatantly deceitful, it should be removed from the Christian canon. Others feel it necessary to reject the pseudonymity of 2 Peter, particularly in view of the consequences for the Bible as they understand it.[10] But of course, this cannot be a solution for serious scholarship. It is better to approach these issues from a different angle: What was the situation or particular challenge that necessitated such a polemical writing, with its particular author-construction and strategy? How could early Christian readers accept it? Can we obtain a key for an appropriate interpretation of this writing by developing a better understanding of its literary and historical context?

The most thoroughgoing theological criticism of 2 Peter was uttered by Ernst Käsemann, who considered the writing a desperate "apologia for primitive Christian eschatology,"[11] that is, a merely dogmatic defense of the expectation

5 Edwin A. Abbott, "Appendix V: The Second Epistle of St. Peter Contrasted with the Gospel of John," in *From Letter to Spirit: An Attempt to Reach through Varying Voices the Abiding Word* (London: Black, 1903), 447.

6 On the polemics in 2 Peter 2, cf. Frey, "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter."

7 On 2 Peter's authorial construction, cf. Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 702–31.

8 The unusual form of the name, differing from 1 Pet 1:1 and in the NT only paralleled in Acts 15:14 (as pronounced by James), is probably chosen to show dignity and perhaps a kind of Palestinian coloring.

9 See the discussion with reference to earlier scholarship in Frey, *Brief*, 180–87 (= *Letter*, 213–21).

10 Cf. e.g., Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, NAC 37 (Nashville, Tenn.: B&H, 2003), 276.

11 Ernst Käsemann, "An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology," in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W.M. Montague (London: SCM, 1964), 169.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of the parousia that reacts to doubts that had arisen after the deaths of the generation of Jesus's contemporaries. In Käsemann's view, the author's argument is poor and theologically mistaken, since in 2 Peter eschatology is no longer the vivid hope in the center of Christian thought but merely a teaching of the Last Things, which is now 'dutifully' defended by the claim of an 'apostolic' testimony. For Käsemann, 2 Peter constitutes the "clearest possible testimony of the onset of early Catholicism" in the New Testament.[12] Subsequent debate, however, has shown that the category of 'Early Catholicism' is far too unclear to encompass the various writings assembled under that label. Moreover, it is too dogmatic to offer an understanding of the intention of the writings and their achievements in their respective historical situations.[13]

In contrast to Protestant critics like Käsemann, Roman Catholic authors have consistently tried to read the epistle as a writing in a genuine Petrine tradition and—even if pseudonymously—as a testimony of apostolic dignity.[14] From an evangelical perspective, Richard Bauckham has done his utmost to establish a relatively early date of the writing and to interpret it within an alleged Roman Petrine school (also including the writings of 1 and 2 Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas),[15] so that 2 Peter can be read as part of Peter's Roman heritage. Even Bauckham, however, could not avoid the critical conclusion that the epistle is written not by Peter himself but by a later author reacting to libertine opponents.[16] In English scholarship, Bauckham's commentary is still unsurpassed, and many later authors merely repeat his arguments without matching his learning and knowledge of sources. None of them could adduce valid reasons against the conclusion that 2 Peter is actually a pseudonymous writing.

1.2 *The Uniqueness of 2 Peter*

In my view, previous scholarship has focused too much on the issue of 'authenticity' or pseudonymity. This perspective of a simple duality between 'genuine' or 'not genuine' is inappropriate when discussing both the complexities

12 Ibid., 195.

13 Cf. the thorough criticism of the concept by Ferdinand Hahn in his articles, "Frühkatholizismus als ökumenisches Problem," and "Das Problem des Frühkatholizismus," both of which appeared in *Exegetische Beiträge zum ökumenischen Gespräch. Gesammelte Aufsätze Bd. 1* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 39–56; 57–75.

14 So, e.g., K.H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe, Der Judasbrief*, HTK 13/2 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1961); J. Zmijewski, "Apostolische Paradosis und Pseudepigraphie im Neuen Testament: 'Durch Erinnerung wachhalten' (2. Petr. 1,13; 3,1)," *BZ* 23 (1979): 161–71; P. Dschulnigg, "Der theologische Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes," *BZ* 33 (1989): 166–71.

15 Cf. Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 149–51; cf. also Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3719–24.

16 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158–62.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of ancient pseudonymous writings as well as the particular features of this writing, which represents, in various respects, a category of its own.

Of course, most scholarly commentaries discuss Jude and 2 Peter in close connection due to the close literary relationship between the two.[17] Nevertheless, 2 Peter must be read as a writing of its own. The fact that the author of 2 Peter uses Jude as a source of inspiration for his polemical section is an insufficient argument for attributing both letters to the same regional or theological milieu, for the view that they are written against similar opponents, or for the idea that both authors share the same type of theological thought. Although some commentaries still read both letters as refutations of libertines[18] or even Gnostics, it must be recognized that there is no valid evidence for labelling the opponents as Gnostics. Additionally, many of the accusations of immorality or sexual licentiousness are standard charges that must be treated with caution and do not allow the precise profile of the opponents to be drawn.[19] Some interpreters also consider the delay of the parousia addressed in 2 Pet 3:4 as a problem in the background of Jude,[20] but there is no real evidence for this in Jude.

It is quite significant that in 2 Peter's reception of Jude, the textual elements which may point to the precise character of the opponents are weakened or omitted, in particular the hints regarding angels or angelic phenomena. Jude's opponents are, in particular, charged with slandering angelic powers (Jude 8–10), which the author probably considered a transgression of the creational

17 Almost unanimously, scholars accept the view that 2 Peter draws on Jude, especially in its polemical part (2 Peter 2:1–3:3), albeit not in the manner that Matthew and Luke adopt Mark, but rather more freely rephrasing Jude's text, using different terms, omitting some of Jude's examples and inserting others. See the discussion in Frey, *Brief*, 154–62 (= *Letter*, 182–92).

18 Cf. e.g., Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006), 22.

19 On those problems see in particular Frey, "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter," 298–304, and Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 721–25. Most problematic is the fact that the author of 2 Peter merely adopts some of the charges addressed against Jude's opponents. In 2 Peter these are simply reused and now applied to its own opponents. It is therefore quite doubtful whether these charges really match the conduct and lifestyle of 2 Peter's opponents or are merely used to vilify those teachers as totally immoral and sinful.

20 Thus, e.g., Anton Vögtle, *Das Neue Testament und die neuere katholische Exegese* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1966), 19, and more recently R. Hoppe, "Parusieglaube zwischen dem ersten Thessalonicherbrief und dem zweiten Petrusbrief: Ein unerledigtes Problem," in *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*, ed. Jacques Schlosser, BETL 176 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 433–49; cf. Hoppe's student Christian Blumenthal, *Prophetie und Gericht: der Judasbrief als Zeugnis urchristlicher Prophetie*, BBB 156 (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

borders between humans and angels.[21] Such a disrespect of angelic beings might be explained in the line of the Pauline or Deutero-Pauline tradition, where principalities and powers are said to be disempowered by Christ so that they cannot receive any kind of worship or reverence.[22] For the author of Jude, who is strongly influenced by the Enochic tradition, such a view may have been the reason to reject those teachers as disrespectful and dangerous. In 2 Peter, however, the example of Michael and Satan (Jude 9), and the quotation from 1 Enoch (Jude 14–15) are omitted and the other references to the angels are phrased in a more general way.[23] Obviously, this characterization did not fit the opponents of 2 Peter and their denial of the parousia in 3:4. Second Peter is directed against different opponents and may therefore come from a different milieu and may pursue different interests than Jude. Although the author found Jude's polemic useful and agreed with it to a certain degree, we must consider the differences to understand each author as accurately as possible.

Thus, despite the close relationship with Jude, 2 Peter is a unique phenomenon in the New Testament. This is true in various respects.[24] Linguistically, the writing develops a "grand style" with "impressive words being carefully selected"[25] giving the impression of "divine power."[26] Second Peter's style is more elaborate than any other New Testament writing. It has a unique density of *hapax legomena* and other rare words, some of which are also unattested in the LXX and other Hellenistic Jewish texts.[27] Its syntax is complicated and sometimes even ambiguous, and its elaborate style is closer to classical texts than to the earliest Christian tradition.[28] Formally, the letter is unique in its particular authorial construction, as a testament of Peter addressing a very wide, 'catholic' audience of all true Christians (2 Pet 1:2), particularly after

21 Cf. e.g., Gerhard Sellin, "Die Häretiker des Judasbriefes," *ZNW* 77 (1986): 206–25; Henning Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*, KEK 12/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 47–48; Peter Müller, "Der Judasbrief," *TR* 63 (1988): 284; see the discussion in Frey, *Brief*, 33–37 (= *Letter*, 40–44).

22 See Rom 8:38–39; 1 Cor 6:3; 15:24; Col 1:16; 2:10–11, 15–18. Cf. Frey, *Brief*, 35 (= *Letter*, 42–43); Jörg Frey, "The Epistle of Jude between Judaism and Hellenism," in *Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition: A New Perspective on James to Jude*, ed. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009), 328–29.

23 Compare 2 Pet 2:4 with Jude 6.

24 Thomas J. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 2, points out the uniqueness with regard to content, theology, and language.

25 Duane F. Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter*, SBLDS 104 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 144–45.

26 Ibid., 79.

27 Cf. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 346–47.

28 Cf. Ibid., 367.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the time of Peter's death (2 Pet 1:12–15). Second Peter notably differs from any other 'Petrine' images and testimonies in the New Testament in its complete silence about Jesus's death and sufferings (contrast 1 Peter). With regard to its contents, 2 Peter is the only New Testament document to refer to a cosmic conflagration, a burning of the world in fire, which is a well-known element of Greco-Roman, particularly Stoic cosmology, but almost completely unattested in ancient Judaism, with the notable exception of the Sibylline Oracles.

The uniqueness of 2 Peter in the New Testament can also be demonstrated by considering its earliest attestation. No other New Testament writing is attested so little and so late as 2 Peter. The earliest clear mention is in Origen, where the epistle is presented as disputed.[29] Accordingly, Origen does not use 2 Peter in his writings preserved in Greek.[30] In contrast to all other New Testament texts, 2 Peter is unattested in all of the authors and key texts from the end of the second century, including Irenaeus and Tertullian and even Clement, who is said to have commented on the Catholic Epistles[31] (there is no evidence of a commentary on 2 Peter by Clement).[32] Both Petrine Epistles are also missing in the Muratorian Canon (where Jude and even the *Apocalypse of Peter* are mentioned). In earlier texts from the second century, 2 Peter is never mentioned. All of the suggested allusions must remain uncertain.

The only text of the second century for which scholars have strongly suggested a reception of 2 Peter is the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which was dated by Richard Bauckham to the Bar-Kochba period. There are, indeed, remarkable parallels between the two works, which may point to a literary relationship. But if the *Apocalypse of Peter* in the first half of the second century were the only testimony to a knowledge of 2 Peter in the whole century, it would be a very lonely testimony for the existence of this letter. Therefore, as I will demonstrate, the relationship between the two writings can be better explained in the reverse direction, with canonical 2 Peter adopting elements from the 'apocryphal' *Apocalypse of Peter*. In any case, 2 Peter's uniqueness calls for a new quest to identify its historical context.

29 Origen, *Comm. Jo.* V.3 (= Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.8).

30 For the writings preserved in a Latin translation, the citations and other elements could be altered in the translation. See the discussion in Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 61–74.

31 Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* VI.14.1. See, however, Cassiodorus's note that Clement commented on 1 Peter, 1/2 John, and James (which might be an erroneous confusion of James and Jude, as Clement has in fact commented on Jude); see Andreas Merkt, *1. Petrus*, NTP 21/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 49 n. 188.

32 Cf. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 204–44.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

1.3 *Towards a New Historical Contextualization*

Apart from the attestation in later authors, 2 Peter's intertextual relationship with other early Christian writings is important for determining its historical context. Apart from the Letter of Jude, which is frequently used in the polemical part of 2 Peter (2 Pet 2:1–3:3), the letter presupposes a collection of Pauline Epistles, which the author considers complete.[33] Second Peter presupposes not only that the Pauline Epistles are collected somewhere but that this collection has been transmitted, received, read, interpreted, and even—according to the author's view—misinterpreted. Such a process takes some time, and the remark in 2 Pet 3:15 should caution against dating the letter too early. In his Utrecht dissertation, Martin G. Ruf has presented a case that the author also knows and uses the Synoptic Tradition, most probably Matthew, in his brief reception of the transfiguration episode.[34] A literary reception of Luke or John cannot be ascertained. Thus, the reception of Matthew, Jude, and a collection of Pauline Epistles (probably including Colossians and Ephesians[35]) should prevent us from dating 2 Peter too early.

The only writing explicitly mentioned, however, apart from the Scriptures, is the earlier letter of the author to the (same) addressees. In 2 Peter 3:1 the (fictive) author mentions that this is now his second letter to the addressees, and that in both letters he had wanted to remind them and to "keep awake" (διεγείρειν) their "pure mind-set" (τὴν εἰλικρινῆ διάνοιαν). The remark is puzzling, and scholars have speculated whether this comment refers to Jude, or even to a part of 2 Peter itself such as chapters 1–2. Since the letter is a literary unity, however, and the remark clearly points to another letter of "Peter," it most probably refers to 1 Peter as a writing already accepted by the author and his audience. The problems are more complicated, however, since the claim that 1 and 2 Peter have the same topic and intention is obviously wrong. The motif of 'remembering' is characteristic for 2 Peter, which is explicitly written so that the communities "may be able at any time to recall these things" after Peter's death (2 Pet 1:15), but the motif is absent from 1 Peter.[36] Moreover, apart

33 Cf. 2 Pet 3:15: "in all his letters," although it is unclear what that may include.

34 Cf. Martin G. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*, WUNT 2/300 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 585–89; for the transfiguration episode see Robert J. Miller, "Is There Independent Attestation for the Transfiguration in 2 Peter?," *NTS* 42 (1996): 620–25.

35 Cf. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 581–82; Frey, *Brief*, 165 (= *Letter*, 195).

36 Cf. Jude 5, where the author seems to adopt the motif from Jude; cf. Karl Matthias Schmidt, *Mahnung und Erinnerung im Maskenspiel: Epistolographie, Rhetorik und Narrativik der pseudepigraphen Petrusbriefe*, HBS 38 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003), 354. The author's suggestion that 2 Pet 3:1 may point to Jude, at least if the recipients knew Jude, is unsubstantiated and contradicts 2 Peter's authorial fiction.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

from a few rather superficial similarities, 2 Peter focuses on other topics than 1 Peter and also presents a very different image of Peter. In 1 Peter, the Apostle is a witness of Jesus's sufferings and partakes in the sufferings of the addressees (1 Pet 5:1). Second Peter, in contrast, is totally silent about Jesus's suffering and death, and only mentions his transfiguration (2 Pet 1:16–18).

Even more striking, the author does not try to imitate the form or the style of 1 Peter.[37] How can he claim that the present letter is from the same author as the earlier one, when it lacks similarity in language, form, themes, and theology? These differences were noted in antiquity, and beginning with Jerome the easiest 'solution' was to claim that a secretary (Silvanus) wrote 1 Peter.[38] Even if this were true, the question remains why the author of 2 Peter does not provide a closer link to the earlier letter, especially since he explicitly mentions it. How could he think his letter could be accepted in spite of those differences? Could he assume that some of his readers would have the literary training necessary to recognize the letter as a kind of 'prosopopoiia' without assuming that the letter was literally written by the 'historical' Peter? From the differences between 1 and 2 Peter we can at least conclude that there is no real evidence for a continuous 'Petrine School' that could provide a social link between 1 and 2 Peter.[39]

1.4 *The* Apocalypse of Peter *and 2 Peter*

As mentioned above, there is only one writing of the second century for which we can assume a literary connection with 2 Peter—the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Richard Bauckham has argued that the *Apocalypse*, which he considers to be a

37 Admittedly, the salutation χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη is the same in 1 Pet 1:2 and 2 Pet 1:2, but the rare form of the verb (in the optative) is also found in Jude 2. Most strikingly, however, the superscription with the form of Peter's name so markedly differs that we have to conclude that the author deliberately did not adapt to 1 Peter.

38 Jerome, *ep.* 120.11; cf. *vir.* 3.1.

39 The existence of a (Roman) group behind 1 Peter was suggested in particular by John H. Elliott, "Peter, Silvanus and Mark in 1 Peter and Sociological-Exegetical Perspectives on a Petrine Group in Rome," in *Wort in der Zeit: Neutestamentliche Studien: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 250–67, and adopted by M.L. Soards, "1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School," *ANRW* 2.25.5 (1988): 3827–49. The hypothesis faces a number of difficulties: (1) It is far from clear that 1 Peter originates in Rome. (2) The idea that 1 Peter originates from a group rather than from a single author is suggested on the basis of sociological theories rather than any concrete evidence. (3) It is problematic to link the early missionaries working with Peter (such as Silvanus and Mark) with a Petrine "community"—located with Peter in Rome. (4) It is mere speculation that 2 Peter is linked with that Roman 'Petrine school,' as there is no evidence at all of such a link in 2 Peter.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Palestinian Jewish-Christian work from the Bar Kokhba period,[40] is dependent on 2 Peter. On this basis, he argues that 2 Peter must be earlier than ca. 130–135 CE. Considering the scarce attestation of 2 Peter before the end of the second century, which can be contrasted with the much better attestation of the *Apocalypse of Peter*,[41] the question arises whether this reconstruction of the intertextual relationship is correct. In his recent study, Wolfgang Grünstäudl convincingly argues that a literary relationship in the reversed order better explains the textual data and the evidence of the early reception history of the two texts.[42] Thus, a closer look at this underestimated and rather unknown text is needed.

1.4.1 The *Apocalypse of Peter*

The *Apocalypse of Peter* is extant in a Greek text (A) from a 6th/7th century codex (P. Cair. 10759)[43] and in an Ethiopic version (E), which is commonly thought to represent the more original text.[44] This is partly confirmed by patristic quotations and also by two Greek fragments (R and B) that probably represent a single manuscript and help to reconstruct the Greek text in a few

40 Cf. Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50; Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160–258; Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 290–303.

41 Cf. Tobias Nicklas, "Spuren der Offenbarung des Petrus in der Alten Kirche," in *Studien zur Offenbarung des Petrus: Historische Einordnung, Überlieferung, Theologie*, ed. Tobias Nicklas and Thomas J. Kraus, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming); see earlier, Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), 87–100; Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988), 22–81 (esp. 22–36), and also Attila Jakab, "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 174–86.

42 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 97–144.

43 See Peter van Minnen, "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 20–21.

44 See the edition and discussion of the text in Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*; for the most recent edition of the Greek texts, see Kraus and Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse.*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

passages.[45] Second-century writers held the text in high esteem: Clement of Alexandria quotes it as γραφή and the Muratorian Fragment mentions it along with the Revelation of John. It is further quoted or mentioned by a number of later texts. Thus, until the end of the second century the *Apocalypse of Peter* was more widely accepted than 2 Peter.[46]

The *Apocalypse of Peter* relates how, in a post-Easter setting, the disciples ask the Lord on the Mount of Olives about the signs of his coming and of the end. Jesus informs them about a false Messiah causing persecution and martyrdom (chs. 1–2). After a brief dialogue with Peter (ch. 3), the text describes the Day of the Lord and the gathering of all people for judgment (ch. 4), the dissolving of the world in fire (ch. 5), and the coming of Christ on a cloud together with his angels to judge the righteous and the wicked (ch. 6). Then, Jesus gives Peter an extensive explanation of the judgments and punishments of different types of sinners (chs. 7–13) before briefly mentioning the fulfilment of his promises to the elect (ch. 14). At this point, Peter is given a personal call for his martyrdom in Rome with the promise that his death will bring about the eschatological events, the destruction of "the son of the one in Hades,"[47] and the eschatological salvation (14:4). Jesus then instructs the disciples to go to the "holy mountain," where they have the vision of Moses and Elijah (viz. the transfiguration), the Paradise, and the heavenly Temple (ch. 15–16), before in the concluding scene Jesus, Moses, and Elijah ascend to heaven (ch. 17).

This colorful and in parts bizarre text shows how apocalyptic imagery continues from Jewish into 'Christian' writings. Numerous biblical and Jewish apocalyptic traditions are adopted,[48] but some elements of the text can be better explained from Greek and Egyptian traditions.[49] In the light of these

45 Fragment R (P. Vindob. G 39756) and fragment B (Bodl. MS. Gr. th. f. 4). Cf. Thomas J. Kraus, "P.Vindob.G 39756 + Bodl. MS Gr. th. f. 4 [P]: Fragmente eines Codex der griechischen Petrus-Apokalypse," *BSAP* 40 (2003): 45–61.

46 Cf. Tobias Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times," in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, ed. Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, LNTS 522 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015), 184: "At least in several circles of the early church, this text was read authoritatively as a form of Scripture (e.g., Clement of Alexandria, *Ecl.* 41.1–3 and 48.1–49.2). Sozomen even states in his *Historia ecclesiastica* (7.19.9) that it was read until the fifth century CE during the Good Friday liturgy of some Palestinian Christian communities."

47 Since the text is not sufficiently clear here, see Ibid., 187–88.

48 References to biblical and Second Temple traditions are collected in Bauckham, "The *Apocalypse of Peter*," 194–246. Cf. also Thomas J. Kraus, "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe," *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98.

49 Cf. Jan N. Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

observations, Bauckham's location of the text in the Bar Kochba period, primarily based on the identification of the false Messiah with Bar Kochba,[50] must be resolutely questioned.[51] No compelling case can be made for an origin in Palestinian Jewish Christianity. In contrast, a number of scholars have recently argued for an Egyptian origin of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. They point to the punishing angel Temelouchos (Apoc. Pet. 8), the Elysian fields and the Acherusian Lake (Apoc. Pet. 14), the river of fire (Apoc. Pet. 12),[52] and the reception of the motif of the burning of the world in fire (Apoc. Pet. 5), which in a Jewish context is only adopted in the Sibylline Oracles (2:194–219; 3:80–92; 4:171–89; 5:209–13), which may also originate in Egypt.[53]

Apart from a few minor terminological similarities,[54] there are a number of significant parallels between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[55] Most prominent is the shared reception of the transfiguration episode (2 Pet 1:16–17; Apoc. Pet. [E] 15–17), with some common details differing from the Synoptic tradition: Both texts refer to a "holy mountain," the divine voice is not from the cloud but from heaven, and the syntagma "honor and glory" is used in both

and Ancient Christian Traditions, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 305–22. The link with Sib. Or. 2 is also significant (cf. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 44–46; Kraus, "Die griechische Petrus-Apocalypse," 84–89). Although Sib. Or. 2 might already use the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the correspondences can point to a common context.

50 Cf. Bauckham, "The *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," 176–94; see also Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 408–12.

51 See the criticism in Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 63–77.

52 Cf. Kraus, "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe," 94–95; Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter"; Tobias Nicklas, "'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, ed. Walter Ameling, Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011), 35–48; Tobias Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, ed. Luca Arcari, STAC 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 27–46.

53 On the Egyptian background of the Jewish Sibylline Oracles, see John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, SBLDS 13 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1974).

54 Cf. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 391–93. See, e.g., phrases with "way," (such as ὁδὸς τῆς δικαιοσύνης, Apoc. Pet. [A] 22, 28 and 2 Pet 2:21) and some more combinations with ὁδός (2 Pet 1:11, 15; 2:2, 15), although this is a rather general feature (Ibid., 393).

55 Cf. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 393–94.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

texts (τιμὴ καὶ δόξα: 2 Pet 1:17; cf. Apoc. Pet. [E] 16:5). Another striking feature is that in both texts Peter is given an individual prophecy of his impending martyrdom (2 Pet 1:13–14; Apoc. Pet. [E] 14:1–4). Furthermore, the description of salvation in terms of "entering the eternal kingdom" of Jesus (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν, 2 Pet 1:11) is only paralleled in Apoc. Pet. 14:4 [R]. Finally, the description of the cosmic conflagration in 2 Pet 3:5–13 has a number of common elements with Apoc. Pet. (E) 4–6 and is unattested in earlier Christian writings. From these common elements, the relationship between both writings may be determined.[56]

1.4.2 The Priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter* Relative to 2 Peter

a) With regard to the *transfiguration pericope*, a literary relationship between both texts is highly probable. But which is the appropriate sequence?

Presupposing that 2 Peter is independent of Matthew,[57] Bauckham reads the scene in Apoc. Pet. 15–17 as a combination of traditions from the Synoptics and 2 Peter.[58] If 2 Peter is in fact aware of the Synoptic tradition and most probably the Gospel of Matthew,[59] another reconstruction becomes more plausible: 2 Peter differs from Matthew only in those instances where 2 Peter and Apoc. Pet. agree. Thus, the reference to the transfiguration in 2 Peter is better understood as a brief and focused combination of a reference to the Synoptic accounts, with the addition of particular features ("holy mountain," heavenly voice, "honor and glory") from the *Apocalypse of Peter* (E).[60]

b) The idea that Jesus has revealed Peter's death in the near future (2 Pet 1:13–14) has puzzled exegetes; the only prophecy of Peter's martyrdom in the New Testament provides no adequate explanation (John 21:18–19), since it only foretells that Peter will be an old man when he dies.[61] Apart from John, the first tradition about Peter's martyrdom is Apoc. Pet. 14, where the Greek fragment from Vienna provides clarification of the (Ethiopic) text. Having revealed the details about the judgment of the sinners, Jesus tells Peter to go to the city that rules over the West (i.e., to Rome) and to "drink the cup which I promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that his destruction (?)

56 Cf. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 105–44; see also Frey, *Brief*, 142–43, 170–73 (= *Letter*, 168–69, 201–6).

57 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 205–10.

58 Thus Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 301–02.

59 Cf. Miller, "Independent Attestation," 620–25; see also recently Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 101–09, and Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 115–19.

60 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 121 (for the full argument, see pp. 114–21).

61 For an interesting new interpretation of this passage, see Timothy D. Barnes, "'Another Shall Gird Thee': Probative Evidence for the Death of Peter," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 76–98.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

may have a beginning" (πίε τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐπηγγειλάμην σοι ἐν χειρὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἅιδου, ἵνα ἀρχὴν λάβῃ αὐτοῦ ἡ ἀφανεία …). In this passage, Peter's martyrdom in Rome under Nero is clearly presupposed. His death is not only "seen as comparable to Jesus' death in Jerusalem,"[62] but also related to the beginning of the destruction of evil powers (probably Nero himself or a kind of 'Antichrist' figure).[63] The text obviously considers Peter's martyrdom a sign for the beginning of the eschatological events, the destruction of evil powers, and the fulfilment of Jesus's promises (ἐπαγγελίαι) to the elect.

This passage not only provides the closest parallel to the remark in 2 Pet 1:14 about Jesus revealing Peter's impending death.[64] It can also help to understand the sceptical saying of the opponents quoted in 2 Pet 3:4, namely, that the Fathers have died without the fulfillment of Jesus's promise (ἐπαγγελία). If there were eschatological expectations related to Peter's death, adopted and spread in a 'Petrine' writing, the opponents' saying in 2 Pet 3:4 can be better explained. Whereas the 'scoffers' could refer to the time that had already passed since the death of Peter without any promises being fulfilled, the author contests their views by composing a 'Testament of Peter,' which gives an ultimate explanation but avoids connecting the eschatological events with Peter's death.

c) The parallels in the extensive description of the conflagration (Apoc. Pet. [E] 4–6) and the shorter and focused reception of the motif in 2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12 provide further confirmation for the view that 2 Peter draws on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. While Bauckham feels the need to speculate about an otherwise unknown Jewish apocalyptic source in 2 Pet 3:5–7, 10, the assumption that the text (esp. 3:10) draws on a scenario as presented in Apoc. Pet. 4–6 provides an easier explanation.[65] The observation that the author's argument for the parousia of Christ seems to include the description of a 'judgment' that is, oddly enough, apparently unrelated to Christ can also be explained in the light of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, where the conflagration is not yet the judgment

62 Cf. Nicklas, "Drink the Cup," 188.

63 Cf. Nicklas, "Drink the Cup," 188, and Richard J. Bauckham, "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 573–74.

64 Admittedly, from the setting of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Jesus's call for Peter to 'drink the cup' is also situated in the post-Easter period (as is John 21:18–19), but it is phrased as if Peter's death was imminent, not decades in the future, whereas in John 21:18–19, the distance is explicitly stressed ("when you are old …").

65 Thus Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 130–36; cf. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, "Petrus, das Feuer und die Interpretation der Schrift: Beobachtungen zum Weltenbrandmotiv im zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, ed. Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, BThS 137 (Neukirchen; Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2013), 183–208.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

proper but rather a preparatory act on the Day of the Lord that precedes the parousia of Christ and his judgment. Only after the conflagration (Apoc. Pet. 4–5) does Christ return with judicial acts related to him. Thus, the literary connection with the *Apocalypse of Peter* can also explain the problem of the almost totally non-christological argument in 2 Pet 3:5–13.[66]

d) A further striking argument is based on the fact that the problem of the eschatological delay is nowhere reflected in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It would be hard to understand why the *Apocalypse of Peter* would adopt the eschatological scenario from 2 Peter without any trace of its intense discussion about the delay of the parousia.

e) A final argument can be taken from 2 Peter's literary connection with Jude. While 2 Peter draws heavily on Jude, there are absolutely no common elements between Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Is it realistic to think that the *Apocalypse* may have used 2 Peter but omitted all the elements from Jude? More plausible is the assumption that the *Apocalypse of Peter* did not know Jude, whereas the author of 2 Peter has adopted elements from Jude and from the *Apocalypse of Peter* and interpreted both to serve his own aims.[67]

These arguments convincingly demonstrate that 2 Peter postdates the *Apocalypse of Peter* and responds to it, that is, to the criticism uttered against some of its views. Second Peter draws on certain elements of the *Apocalypse*, but it does so from a critical distance, particularly correcting the claim that Peter's death would inaugurate eschatological salvation. At a time when sixty years or more had lapsed since Peter's martyrdom, such a claim, circulating in a writing attributed to Peter, certainly caused skeptical rejection. The challenge for the author of 2 Peter was, then, to reinterpret and defend the eschatological hope in view of the time interval and the different intellectual context. For this he chose the form of a Petrine pseudepigraphon, or even more precisely, of a 'Testament of Peter' in which Peter gives the definitive interpretation of 'his' revelation. He maintains and confirms the hope in Christ's eschatological return, but decisively rejects any attempt at dating the eschaton.

Thus, the rationale of the composition of 2 Peter can be better explained when the background of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is taken into consideration. The reason for 2 Peter is not merely the alleged 'delay of the parousia,' but much more precisely the delay after a second date, the death of one of the 'Fathers' of the earliest Christian generation, and the skeptical denial of eschatological expectations that was caused or at least strengthened by such a naïve concept. Second Peter defends the eschatological hope by using various strategies, but

66 On these aspects, see more extensively below, section 2.2.2 and 2.3.3.

67 Thus Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 137–41.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

he implicitly corrects the expectation as phrased in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The text thereby avoids fixing any date and thus 'saves' the eschatological hope, or at least prevents it from being so easily 'falsified.'

1.5 *Second Peter and the 'Petrine Discourse'*

Second Peter contributes to an ongoing 'Petrine discourse.'[68] From the extant 'Petrine' literature—i.e., the texts attributed to Peter—2 Peter not only (and not even primarily) draws on 1 Peter but also on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Apart from the 'Petrine' writings, however, we should also consider the plurality of Petrine images from the New Testament, from the Gospels and Acts, from the Pauline mention of "Kephas," and from 1 Peter. If we can assume that, at the time of composition of 2 Peter, there were not only those images and one single Petrine writing (1 Peter), but also other traditions or writings referring to or even attributed to Peter (without necessarily being linked to a common milieu or 'school'), we can call this a rather developed 'Petrine discourse.' The figure of Peter and his testimony is linked with or utilized for various ideas and arguments, and this is widened in the later Petrine literature, representing viewpoints ranging from Jewish Christianity (Pseudo-Clementines) to Gnosticism (Nag Hammadi texts). We may even ask if Peter was particularly useful for negotiating various ideas because the historical Peter had not left any written texts.

If there was already such a plurality of Petrine images at the time of 2 Peter, it is much easier to explain why the author of 2 Peter did not feel the need to adapt his letter formally or stylistically to the already accepted (first) Letter of Peter. His situation differs, therefore, from the author of 2 Thessalonians, who eagerly tried to imitate the form and adopt the themes of 1 Thessalonians in order to make some 'corrections' to Paul's eschatology.

If Grünstäudl's argument for a location of 2 Peter in the Alexandrian milieu is valid, the author may even be aware of another 'Petrine' writing, the Kerygma of Peter,[69] quoted several times by Clement, and somewhat earlier in a commentary on the Psalms adopted by Clement.[70] It is also quoted as an authority in Heracleon's commentary on John.[71] Clement seems to consider

68 I adopt a pattern here in analogy to what Hindy Najman has called a 'Mosaic Discourse'; cf. Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003).

69 See the text in Michel Cambe, *Kerygma Petri: textus et commentarius*, CChrSA 15 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); cf. Henning Paulsen, "Das Kerygma Petri und die urchristliche Apologetik," *ZKG* 88 (1977): 1–37; Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 90–97.

70 *Strom* II.68,1–2; cf. Cambe, *Kerygma*, 45.

71 Origen, *Com. Jo.* XIII.17.194; cf. Cambe, *Kerygma*, 15–28.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

it an authentic testimony of Peter—or at least he does not utter any doubts about it. In the Kerygma of Peter, Peter serves as the spokesman of a completely Gentile type of Christianity, rejecting pagan cults as well as Jewish practices and angel veneration.[72] Christ is called "Nomos" and "Logos."[73] God is depicted in Platonizing terms[74] as the creator of all things, and he is also said to have the power to set an end.[75] The interpretation of Scripture and the motif of "insight" ([ἐπι]γινώσκειν) seem to be predominate elements of Peter's teaching in the Kerygma.

Although the text is only preserved fragmentarily, we may assume that the theological milieu of 2 Peter may be relatively close to the Kerygma of Peter. The Kerygma is also rooted in a predominantly Gentile Christian background and shaped by Hellenistic terms (such as εὐσέβεια and θεοσέβεια). 'Knowledge' (ἐπίγνωσις) of Christ is a central motif, as in 2 Peter. Second Peter apparently only differs from the Kerygma in its eschatological views. In other aspects, however, 2 Peter seems to differ more widely from the milieu of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and even from 1 Peter than from the Kerygma of Peter.

When this later 'Petrine Discourse,' probably located in Alexandria, is considered, it should be no great surprise that 2 Peter adopts a remarkably small selection of traditions about Peter in the Gospels and in Paul. Nor does he feel the need to adapt his language to 1 Peter, but feels free to utilize a different genre and a different style. In addition to 1 Peter, there were also a number of Petrine writings and narrative images of the apostle. For this reason, the imitation of the style and thought of 1 Peter were not mandatory to present the new Petrine Epistle as 'authentic' or to form the 'mask' of Peter for an appropriate 'prosopopoiia.' Second Peter could enter a wider 'Petrine discourse,' adding a number of new aspects to an already existing variety of Petrine images. Thus, 2 Peter's image of Peter and its contribution to the discourse are not totally new, but draw on various aspects of Peter's message as transmitted in earlier 'Petrine' writings, while modifying and occasionally correcting them.

1.6 *How Can the 'New Perspective' Help Us Understand the Reason for 2 Peter?*

This 'new perspective' on 2 Peter, which posits a late, probably Alexandrian origin for the letter and, most importantly, dependency on the 'apocryphal' *Apocalypse of Peter*, can help solve some of the riddles of this maverick writing.

72 Clem. of Alex., *Strom.* 6.39.4–40.2 and 6.41.2–3.
73 Clem. of Alex., *Strom.* 1.182.3; 2.68.2 and *Ecl.* 58.
74 Clem. of Alex., *Strom.* 6.58.1.
75 Clem. of Alex., *Strom.* 6.5.39.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

In particular, it can help us understand the reason for its literary form and some particularities of its argument. The author chooses the form of a Testament of Peter, together with a rather bold pseudonymous authorial construction, so that Peter himself can 'authentically' interpret the message he had received from the risen Jesus concerning his martyrdom and correct the dangerously naïve connection of his own death with the beginning of the eschatological fulfilment and the end of the evil Powers. In this manner—without the aspects so easily criticized by the rivalling teachers—he can confirm both the truth of the eschatological promise and the faithfulness of God and his prophetic word. He can proclaim Christ's authority to judge and to save—a message that is indispensable for the ethical exhortation the author wants his readers to keep in mind.

The new historical contextualization is, therefore, important for the interpretation of the letter and also for acknowledging its theological legacy. Reading 2 Peter against the background of the *Apocalypse of Peter* can more precisely explain the reasons why such an enigmatic and—within the New Testament—unique letter was written and why its author designed it as it is.

2 Between Conflagration and New Creation: Eschatology in 2 Peter

Having discussed the historical and literary context of 2 Peter, we can now focus on 2 Peter's eschatology.[76] With this topic, we turn to the main issue between the author and his opponents, the so-called 'scoffers' (ἐμπαῖκται, 2 Pet 3:3) and 'false teachers' (ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι, 2 Pet 2:1).[77] Of course, there are probably other issues, in particular ethical differences, between the author and the opposed teachers, but the only topic for which the author explicitly presents the viewpoint of his opponents and a detailed refutation is eschatology. After the long tirade of harsh polemical attacks in chapter 2, which is mainly based on Jude, the author moves to the main point of debate, quoting a 'slogan' of those opposing teachers (2 Pet 3:4): "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, everything remains as it has been since the beginning of the world."

76 On the topic, see my earlier article "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ," and the detailed interpretations in my commentary. On 2 Peter's eschatology, see also Grünstäudl, "Feuer," 183–208.

77 The unity of the epistle and the identity of the opponents in 2 Pet 2:1–21 and in 2 Pet 3:3–4 should no longer be questioned. It is most probably the same group as in chs. 2 and 3.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2.1 *Scholarly Perspectives on the Parousia and Its Delay*

The problem addressed in this section relates to the so-called 'delay' of the parousia. In 2 Peter 3:9 the idea of a 'delay' (βραδύνειν) of the Lord's promise is openly addressed. It is presented as a view held by some community members to explain the fact that at their time, the fulfilment of the promise had not (yet) happened. But it is clearly rejected as erroneous by the author of 2 Peter, since such an explanation would also cast doubts on the reliability of God and his promises. The author therefore insists that for God there is no delay; his acts cannot be measured by human time scales. Therefore, he introduces a creative application of the well-known saying about the thousand years and one day,[78] which clarifies that any kind of time calculation is inappropriate with regard to the 'day of God' or the beginning of the eschatological events.[79]

Interestingly, 2 Peter 3:9 is the only passage in the NT that explicitly mentions the idea of a 'delay' of the parousia. This may be a surprise in view of the prominence the topic was given in 20th-century New Testament scholarship, where "Parusieverzögerung" was one of the most important technical terms.[80]

The phenomenon as such can hardly be denied. We can see that parts of the earliest Jesus movement, including Paul, shared a very strong or even 'enthusiastic' expectation of the imminent return of the exalted Christ and the inauguration of God's Kingdom (cf. 1 Thess 4:15, 17; 1 Cor 15:51–52; Mark 1:15; 14:25, etc.). Such an expectation, partly connected with the lifetime of the first Christian generation (cf. Mark 9:1), had to face a crisis when the first generation was about to die. Thus, it is not surprising that the hope for Christ's return gradually developed into an expectation without any fixed date or timing (cf. Acts 1:7). Nevertheless, early Christian communities were able to cope with such a development, because their identity was not only built on the expectation of an imminent end of the world but more strongly on the belief in Jesus as the exalted Lord, the conviction of the fulfilment of biblical promises in him, and the experience of the Spirit. It is therefore questionable whether

78 On the various appropriations of that verse, see Frey, *Brief*, 339–40 (= *Letter*, 402), and in particular Wolfgang Schrage, "Ein Tag ist vor dem Herrn wie tausend Jahre, und tausend Jahre sind wie ein Tag," in *Glaube und Eschatologie: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Erich Gräßer and Otto Merk (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 267–76.

79 If we understand 2 Peter against the background of the expectation of the imminent end as presented in the *Apocalypse of Peter* (Apoc. Pet. 14:4), such an argument seems to be particularly fitting, as it excludes any dated expectation from a biblical and theological perspective.

80 Cf. Jörg Frey, "Eschatology in the New Testament—an Introduction: Classical Issues, Disputed Themes, and Current Perspectives," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 25–26.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

that transformation was such a prominent factor in the development of early Christian thought.[81] In any case, the concept of the 'Parusieverzögerung' as presupposed in parts of (German) critical scholarship appears far too simple. There was no linear development from an apocalyptically imminent expectation to a rather a-temporal, 'Hellenistic' concept. And if, as more recent scholarship has called to mind, ancient time-concepts were rather emotional or affection-oriented,[82] the perception of time as condensed or detached was rather dependent on individual and communal experiences, political crises, or religious tribulations. Thus, an intense expectation could be revitalized in a particular situation, as we can see from numerous texts of the second and third centuries, while on the other hand, authors from Luke to Hippolytus can argue for a more detached understanding of time. It is impossible, therefore, to 'locate' a writing within the development of early Christian thought based on the temporal character of its eschatology.

According to the paradigms of 'Hellenization' and 'Parusieverzögerung,' 2 Peter could be considered an untimely 'apology' of a type of Christian eschatology that clung to the earliest period but was inappropriately used in the author's later context.[83] Such an interpretation, however, is too imprecise regarding the 'scoffers' and the author's argument. In the 'new perspective' developed here, we can arrive at a more precise understanding. For this, we will have to look more closely at the quotation in 3:4 and then at the author's detailed refutation in 3:5–13.

2.2 *The Quotation of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3:4 and Its Problems*

"Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, everything remains just as it has been since the beginning of the world." This slogan has puzzled interpreters. Of course, we cannot deny that its exact wording is phrased by the author himself, who depicts those 'scoffers'—labelled with a term adopted from Jude 18—in biblical colors: They are not only opposed to the just, but with their bold questions[84] they ultimately provoke the Lord himself

81 As David E. Aune has stated, the phenomenon of the 'delay of the parousia' was often considered "the most important factor for the transformation of early Christian eschatology from an emphasis on the *imminent* expectation of the end to a vague expectation in the more distant future" (David E. Aune, "Eschatology [Early Christian]," *ABD* 2:606). See most prominently Erich Grässer, *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte*, 2nd ed., BZNW 22 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 1960).

82 Cf. Kurt Erlemann, *Naherwartung und Parusieverzögerung im Neuen Testament: ein Beitrag zur Frage religiöser Zeiterfahrung*, TANZ 17 (Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1995), 365.

83 Cf. Käsemann, "Apologia."

84 Cf. e.g., Jer 17:15; Ezek 12:22; Ps 41:4, 11 LXX.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

to demonstrate his power. The scoffers ask for the "promise of his παρουσία," with the skeptical implication that this promise has not been fulfilled up to the present and will probably never be fulfilled in the future. Thus, both the promise and the reliability of God himself are questioned.

2.2.1 The Meaning of Παρουσία

Scholars have asked whether the term παρουσία actually points to the hope in Christ's return or to the coming of God.[85] In spite of its wide range of possible meanings,[86] the lexeme παρουσία is probably used here as a technical term for Christ's return, as evidenced in the Gospel of Matthew and the earliest Christian literature.[87] In contrast to the frequent usage in the NT, παρουσία occurs only four times in the LXX and in late texts composed in Greek, and consistently with a non-religious meaning.[88] Interestingly, the term is never used with regard to the 'coming' of God or the 'day of the Lord.' Thus, the usage in early Christian texts—such as 1 Thess for the return and second coming of Christ—is a semantic innovation within the Jesus movement. In 2 Peter, the term is first introduced in 2 Pet 1:16 in the characterization of the apostolic teaching about "the power and coming of Jesus Christ" (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν). Although in that context the notion of Christ's "mighty presence" could be discussed, the characterization of the παρουσία as promised in 2 Pet 3:4 confirms that it must refer to his return. Therefore, the phrase "promise of his coming" should be understood with regard to the expectation of the parousia of Christ, which was apparently the most obvious (although not the only) point of dispute.

2.2.2 The Non-Christological Character of the Argument

The discussion is further complicated by the observation that Christ is never mentioned in 2 Pet 3:4 or in the subsequent argument (vv. 5–13). In the whole of 2 Peter 3, Christ seems to be strikingly absent. Rather, God is the one who acts through his word (vv. 5 and 7). In v. 12, the author uses the unusual term

85 Thus, recently Edward Adams, "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4," *NTS* 51 (2005): 106–22.

86 An understanding of παρουσία in terms of 'presence' (which can be discussed in 2 Pet 1:16) is excluded here by the connection with 'promise.' A reference to the first coming of Christ, which can be found first in Ign. Phld. 9:2; then in KerygPet frg. 9 [Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 6.15.128) and in Justin (*Dial.* 88.2; *Apol.* 48.2 and 54.7) is excluded in the present context.

87 Cf. 1 Thess 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; Jas 5:7–8; Matt 24:27, 37, 39, etc.

88 Jdt 10:18; 2 Macc 8:12; 15:12; 3 Macc 3:17.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

ἡμέρα τοῦ θεοῦ,[89] and if the term κύριος is used, as in vv. 8–10, it remains somewhat unclear whether Christ or God is meant. How can we explain the puzzling 'non-Christological' character of the argument and the absence of Christ in the eschatological acts described if the topic is ultimately the hope of Christ's coming?[90]

Due to these observations, scholars have looked for a non-Christian Jewish sub-text adopted in 2 Pet 3:5–12. Some have even speculated that the death of the fathers mentioned in v. 4 might not point to the Christian 'fathers' of the first generation, but rather to the biblical Fathers, the Patriarchs.[91] In the Scriptures, however, there is no connection between the patriarchs and the expectation of the 'day of the Lord' or the eschatological expectation. Therefore, such a reading is rather unconvincing and unable to challenge the interpretation in v. 4 as a reference to Christ's parousia.

2.2.3 The Search for a Jewish Source

It was Richard Bauckham in particular who tried to find a Jewish source behind the scoffers' slogan in v. 4[92] and also behind the argument in vv. 5–13.[93] For the slogan, Bauckham points to the parallel in 1 Clem 23:3 and 2 Clem 11:2, where a γραφή or a προφητικὸς λόγος is quoted. In 1 Clem 23:3 we read:

> Miserable are the double-minded and those who are doubting in their soul, who say: 'These things we have heard even in the times of our fathers; but, behold, we have grown old, and none of them has happened unto us.'

In 2 Clem 11:2 the quotation is almost identical, so that it is clear that 1 and 2 Clement adopted the same passage from an unknown writing and characterized it as prophetic or even as 'Scripture.' In that writing, the double-minded (δίψυχοι) or doubters (διστάζοντες) point to something they have heard in the time of their fathers (i.e., when they were young), but since then they have grown old and nothing has happened. As a result, they are now disappointed

89 This term, however, can be explained from Apoc. Pet. 4, where the day of the conflagration is also called the 'day of God.'

90 Cf. Käsemann, "Apologia," 178: 2 Peter 3 "lacks any vestige of Christological orientation."

91 Thus Adams, "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?'," 111–14. The argument is also used by authors who want to maintain the Petrine authenticity of the epistle; thus, e.g., E. Earle Ellis, *The Making of the New Testament Documents*, BIS 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 295–96; Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 373.

92 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 285; cf. the critical discussion in Frey, *Brief*, 319–20 (= *Letter*, 377–79).

93 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 284, 296–97, 304–5; cf. the criticism in Frey, *Brief*, 326 (= *Letter*, 385–86).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

and doubt the validity of the earlier promise. Bauckham, in a daring speculation, links this quotation with the lost book of *Eldad and Modad*, which is quoted in the Shepherd of Hermas (Vis. 2.3.4).[94] The only reason for that conclusion is the rare term δίψυχοι, which is used only once in the NT (Jas 4:8) but frequently (18 times) in Hermas, and, apart from that, in the Apostolic Fathers only in the saying quoted in 1 and 2 Clement and in 1 Clem 11:2. Although the term is so significant for Hermas, the idea that it is adopted from the prophetic writing quoted in Herm. Vis. 2.3.4, the book of *Eldad and Modad,* cannot be confirmed. Based on the assumption that not only the Shepherd of Hermas, 1 Clement and 2 Clement, but also 2 Peter in his quotation of the 'scoffers' draw on that Jewish writing, Bauckham tries to explain the 'non-Christological' character of the argument and also the strong presence of apocalyptic motifs in an otherwise strongly Hellenistic writing.

I personally find this construction unconvincing. Apart from the fact that we know almost nothing about *Eldad and Modad*, it is extremely daring to identify the γραφή mentioned in 1 Clem 23:3 with that lost pseudepigraphon mentioned by Hermas only on the basis of the term δίψυχοι. Moreover, it would seem rather odd to assume that the author of 2 Peter adopts the description of the views of his opponents (and in parts also the refutation) from a written source. Is it not crucial for his argument that the description of the opponents' views accurately matches their ideas? A literary procedure, as envisioned by Bauckham, would be hard to understand. Furthermore, there are notable differences between the saying quoted in 1 and 2 Clement and the slogan of the scoffers in 2 Pet 3:4. Whereas in the saying of the δίψυχοι the promise is rather unspecific and the question of the παρουσία is not clearly addressed, 2 Peter 3:4 explicitly mentions the technical term παρουσία. And whereas the δίψυχοι simply point to the time when they were young as their "fathers' times," 2 Peter 3 explicitly points to the death of the fathers. This may suggest that the fathers' death had a particular relevance for the fulfilment of the eschatological promise.

2.2.4 The *Apocalypse of Peter* as Background for 2 Peter 3

It is exactly at this point that the 'new perspective' on 2 Peter as sketched in this essay can show its explanatory force. The mention of the death of 'the fathers' becomes much more intelligible if the death at least of one of those 'fathers' of the first Christian generation was linked with eschatological expectation.

94 On that book, see now Richard J. Bauckham, "Eldad and Modad," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, ed. Richard J. Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2013), 244–56.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

a) The only early Christian witness for whom such an idea is known is Peter. With respect to him, Apoc. Pet. 14:4 (R) expresses the expectation that with his martyrdom at the hand of Nero, the eschatological events—the end of Nero or the Antichrist and the deliverance of the faithful—will commence. Against this background, the scoffers' slogan can easily be understood as a skeptical comment on such a 'Petrine' expectation: How could it hold weight in light of the death and resurrection of Christ as well as the second date, the death of Peter. And it is quite logical that the author would aim at correcting such a naïve 'Petrine' view by devising the fiction that Peter in his literary testament provided the 'authentic' interpretation of his martyrdom and in particular of that promise. According to this new, authoritative Petrine account, the idea of a fixed 'date' of the end events and of a possible 'delay' of the promise is considered inappropriate, so that the argument of the scoffers is also shown to be based on an erroneous presupposition.

b) If the source behind 2 Peter 3 is not an unknown Jewish apocalypse but the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it is also quite conceivable that 2 Peter 3 provides a strongly 'apocalyptic' scenario, as this scenario closely matches that of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

c) Most strikingly, in the given period only these two texts, the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter, share the expectation of a burning of the world in fire (i.e., a conflagration).

d) Finally, the non-Christological character of 2 Peter 3:5–13 can be explained in view of the sequence of events in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, where the 'day of the Lord' implies first a burning of the world in fire, which is not yet the judgment but rather a preparation for the judgment of humans and their works. According to *Apoc. Pet.* 6, it is after the conflagration that Christ returns on a cloud to sit on the throne of glory and to judge the deeds of all humans. The fire that punishes sinners must therefore be distinguished from the fire of the conflagration before Christ's return. It thus becomes conceivable why the description of the conflagration does not mention Christ. Second Peter 3:12 phrases this quite precisely: The burning of the heavens and the elements happens "for the sake of" the "day of God," viz. of the judgment (i.e., as a preparatory act).

2.3 *The Argument in 2 Peter 3:5–13*

The slogan of the scoffers includes two arguments that question the hope for the eschatological fulfilment: First, 'the fathers have passed away' without anything happening, and second, the world is unchanged since creation (and will remain unchanged). The two arguments are refuted in vv. 5–13 in reverse order. The cosmological argument for the 'immutability' of the world is refuted in

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

vv. 5–7 with the reference to the flood. The argument for the unfulfilled promise and the idea of an alleged 'delay' is then refuted in vv. 8–10, especially by appealing to Psalm 90:4. Both passages are linked with a unique view of cosmic conflagration (vv. 7, 10, 12). The final goal, however, after the dissolution of the present world is a new and final creation, a "new heavens and a new earth" characterized by justice (v. 13).

The argument combines biblical and early Christian elements, such as the flood, the saying from Psalm 90:4, the hope for a 'new heaven and a new earth' (cf. Isa 65:17; 66:22), and the saying about the thief (cf. 1 Thess 5:2; Matt 24:43–44; par. Luke 12:39–40), with elements from more general or even philosophical discourses on the cosmos and its stability or destruction. In particular, the author adopts the idea of the burning of the world in fire, which was most prominent in Stoicism. This idea, however, is specifically modified or 'corrected' according to the biblical tradition: In contrast to Stoicism, it is not understood as a purification but as an act of judgment, or, more precisely, as the preparation for judgment. Moreover, the author does not expect an infinite sequence of worlds, but only reckons with the three worlds presented in the biblical tradition: the antediluvian world, which was destroyed by the flood, the present world, which will be destroyed in fire on the 'day of God,' and the promise of new creation. These observations show that 2 Peter 3 is not a poor and desperate defense of a primitive Christian dogma but rather a creative interaction with current ideas, including philosophical debates, about the cosmos and its eternity and 'history.'

2.3.1 The Flood as a Total Destruction of the World

The author's account of the flood illustrates this (2 Pet 3:6). In contrast to the biblical accounts, the flood is understood as a destruction not only of the earth but of the whole created cosmos (i.e., of "heavens and earth"). Such an interpretation is unwarranted from the biblical and early Jewish traditions of the flood story. It is only conceivable as an analogy to the second act of destruction, which is expected to happen not by water but by fire—the burning of the world as introduced in 2 Pet 3:7 and resumed in 3:10 and 3:12. Apparently, the author wants to present two parallel acts of judgment, one by water and the other one by fire, which are both caused by the word of God. The reference to the deluge serves as a refutation of the idea that the world is unchanged since its beginning. According to the author, the flood implied the total destruction of the first creation, and we may conjecture that the present, postdiluvial world is already thought of as a second creation. Such a view of the flood could serve as a confirmation for the expectation of a second total destruction of the world, this time by fire instead of water. Thus, the interpretation of the flood story confirms the

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

idea that a last judgment as announced by biblical prophecies will finally happen. Or phrased differently: The deluge is creatively reinterpreted to support the eschatological expectation.

2.3.2 The Distinction between Conflagration and Judgment and the Textual Problem of the "Works" in 2 Pet 3:10

The idea of conflagration, adopted in vv. 7, 10, and 12, is unique in the New Testament. In particular, the phrase that on the day of the Lord "the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat [i.e., with fire], dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works on it will be 'found'" (2 Pet 3:10) has puzzled exegetes.[95]

This verse provides one of the most debated textual problems in the New Testament; ancient writers and translators already noted the difficulty of the text and suggested various 'improvements.'[96]

The main question is: How (and for whom) should the earth and its works, mentioned in line 3 of v. 10, become visible if the whole world is destroyed by fire and the elements melt? The committee of the Editio Critica Maior and the new 28th edition of Nestle-Aland seem to hold the opinion that this text is totally incomprehensible, making it legitimate to correct the text by means of a bold conjecture.[97] By way of "correction," they insert a negation (οὐχ), which is only attested in the Sahidic version but not in Greek, so that the meaning of the third line is inverted to "the works on it will *not* be found." With that correction, all three lines of v. 10 point to an analogous destruction: As the heavens and the 'elements' (i.e., the luminaries) will be destroyed, the earth and the works on it will also "not be found" anymore (i.e., will disappear by destruction). On a superficial level, the verse appears coherent on this reading, expressing a total destruction of all parts of the world by fire.

---

95 Cf. Edward Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven: Cosmic Catastrophe and the World's End in the New Testament and Its World*, LNTS 347 (London: Continuum, 2007), 224–29.

96 The text-critical problem of v. 10 is complex. In my view, εὑρεθήσεται, accepted in the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland, has the best attestation (in Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) and should be retained. The early corrections and modern conjectures can be explained as the result of efforts to understand how (and for whom) the works on earth should become 'visible.' The choice of the *Editio Critica Maior*, which inserts a negation (οὐχ) without any attestation, is quite arbitrary and deserves to be rejected; see Christian Blumenthal, *"Es wird aber kommen der Tag des Herrn": eine textkritische Studie zu 2Petr 3,10*, BBB 154 (Hamburg: Philo, 2007). See also the critical excursus in Frey, *Brief*, 345–47 (= *Letter*, 409–13).

97 Cf. D.C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 308–9; for criticism see Grünstäudl, "Feuer," 200.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The negation οὐχ, however, is unattested in the Greek manuscripts, and a number of variants show that even ancient scribes struggled with the text here and tried to create a 'lectio facilior' with a negative meaning, suggesting that the earth and the works will be "found dissolved" (εὑρεθήσεται λυόμενα), will "be consumed by fire" (κατακαήσεται) or will "be made invisible" (ἀφανισθήσονται). The thoughts of the ECM editors seem to be analogous, and their conjecture is a further desperate attempt to make sense of the difficult text. Those variants are all easier readings compared with the *lectio difficilior* εὑρεθήσεται. If the methodological rule is valid that a conjecture can only be legitimate if the text is otherwise totally inconceivable, we must ask whether this is the case.

Again, consideration of the *Apocalypse of Peter* can help to understand the text, and it is obvious that this perspective was not included in the considerations of the ECM committee. In Apoc. Pet. 4–6 the events of the "day of God" (Apoc. Pet. 4:1 [E]; cf. 2 Pet 3:12) are extensively described, although the chronological sequence may not be clear in detail. One aspect, however, is important: After the extensive destruction of the whole world, including the waters, by fire, and the melting of the whole creation, including the stars, the firmaments of heaven, and the waters (Apoc. Pet. 5:2–6 [E]):

> Cataracts of fire will be opened up and there will be fog and darkness and the whole world will veil and clothe itself. And the waters will be turned and will be given into coals of fire and everything which is in it will burn up and even the ocean will become fire. From under heaven (there will be) a bitter fire which does not go out and it will flow for the judgment of wrath. Even the stars will melt in a flame of fire like they had not been created. And the firmaments of heaven in a lack of water will go and become like what were not created.… And then the whole creation has been melted.[98]

A few lines later, humans will flee in all directions, but "the awesome wrath of fire will find them" (Apoc. Pet. 5:8 [E]). The description of the conflagration ends with the phrase, "there will be much gnashing of teeth for the children of men" (Apoc. Pet. 5:9 [E]). It is notable and may be considered a logical inconsistency that after the melting of the "whole creation," humans are still mentioned and obviously considered to be alive and present. The reason for this is clear: The judgment of humans and their deeds has yet to happen, and the whole description of the conflagration is utilized in order to present a dramatic account of the Last Judgment.

98 Apoc. Pet. 5:2–6 (E), translation according to Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 189–91.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

For this reason, the text now describes Christ's return "on a shining cloud" together with his angels (Apoc. Pet. 6:1 [E]). Sitting on the throne of his glory, he now enacts the judgment on all humans according to their works. The text continues by saying that God

> will command them (that) they pass through the river of fire. And *the works of each one of them will stand before them*, each one according to his deed. But each of the elect, those who have done good, will come to me when they have died. The devouring fire will see nothing of them. But the evildoers and the sinners and the hypocrites will stand among the abysses of the darkness which does not go out and their punishment (is) the fire. And the angels will bring their sins and prepare for them a place where they will be punished forever, each one according to his guilt.[99]

In this passage, the "works" of humans are specifically mentioned. After the crossing of the fiery river, the works of humans will "stand before them," i.e., will be visible as the decisive element that distinguishes between the good and the evil, between the elect who are with Jesus and not hit by the fire of judgment, and the sinners who will be punished by fire in accordance with their guilt.

This is particularly significant for the interpretation of 2 Pet 3:10, as (according to the imagination of the *Apocalypse of Peter*) there is 'something' left after the melting of the "whole creation," namely, the humans who still have to face judgment, and the "works" specifically mentioned as a visible sign of the 'quality' of each human being and as the basis for the Last Judgment. This closely matches the text of 2 Pet 3:10 (according to B and ℵ) that after the melting of the heavens and the luminaries, "the earth and the works on it will be found (εὑρεθήσεται)." If being found means being visible and openly revealed, this is a very close parallel that can explain the εὑρεθήσεται of 2 Pet 3:10, so that this reading is no longer incomprehensible.

Another parallel confirms this. 2 Clement 16:3 states:

> But you know that the day of judgment is coming like a burning oven and some of the heavens will melt and all the earth will melt like lead in a fire, and *then the hidden and open things that people have done will be made visible* (φανήσεται).[100]

99 Apoc. Pet. 6:2–6 (E), translation according to Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 193–95.

100 Translation according to Christopher M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, OAF (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 115.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

This text—roughly from the same period as the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter—also briefly takes up the idea of a cosmic conflagration, mentions the deeds of humans, and explains that the melting of parts of the cosmos will make those deeds visible: they are no longer hidden but will be decided upon in judgment. The earth is said to melt like lead, and the works that are the final and climactic element (cf. 2 Peter 3:10) are revealed. Thus, εὑρεθήσεται in 2 Pet 3:10d "has to do with discovery at the last judgment."[101] In 2 Pet 3:14 the same verb is used again in the passive, albeit in a different construction, namely, 'to be found + adjective' (εὑρεθῆναι ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι). This accords "with a wider pattern of usage of the verb in the New Testament,"[102] and the meaning is quite similar to that of the 'absolute' εὑρεθήσεται in 2 Pet 3:10. As Edward Adams rightly notes, "the phrase 'the earth and the works in it' … should be taken as a grammatical metaphor for 'the works done (by human beings) upon the earth.'"[103] The point is "that the eschatological dissolution will expose all the deeds of human beings to divine scrutiny. This breaks from the thought of the preceding lines, but the shift from cosmic destruction to the judgment of human beings is consistent with vv. 5–7."[104]

If this is the concept behind the conflagration imagery in 2 Peter, we should not expect the works to disappear or to be destroyed like the heavens and the stars, but rather to be revealed and made visible. Thus, the conjecture that inserts a negation into 2 Pet 3:10 is unnecessary. The text is intelligible in the version that was preferred in the 27th and earlier editions of Nestle-Aland. The conjecture in the ECM and the 28th edition should, therefore, be rejected and deleted in subsequent editions of the Nestle-Aland text.

A further aspect is important. In the *Apocalypse of Peter* there is apparently a distinction between the burning of the "whole creation" in fire and the destructive and punishing fire of judgment. Whereas after the conflagration humans are still considered 'alive' and present, fleeing in fear and crossing through a river of fire, the judgment will then separate the elect who are with Christ and the sinners who are punished in a fiery abyss. The conflagration merely prepares for the act of judgment. It happens still '*remoto Christo*'; only after the conflagration does Christ return to enact the judgment of all humans. Thus, the conflagration—the dissolution of the cosmos—is not yet considered a work of Christ or connected to Christ. This helps explain the

101 Thus Adams, *Stars*, 228.

102 Adams, *Stars*, 228, hints at 1 Cor 4:2, Gal 2:7, and Gal 3:9.

103 Adams, *Stars*, 228, with reference to Frederick W. Danker, "II Peter 3:10 and Psalm of Solomon 17:10," *ZNW* 53 (1962): 82–86.

104 Adams, *Stars*, 228.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

non-Christological character of the argument (not only with regard to the flood but also to the conflagration) in 2 Pet 3:5–13.

The general idea of a destruction of heaven and earth and the melting of the elements is very similar in 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, although the description in the *Apocalypse* is much more extensive. Taking into account the concept as it appears in the *Apocalypse of Peter* helps to elucidate the text of 2 Peter 3 and its difficulties. Both texts focus on the Last Judgment and its connection with the parousia of Christ in which human works are decisive; both texts seem to distinguish between a cosmic conflagration and the judgment proper that separates the elect and the condemned. This is particularly important for a reception of the ancient concept of *ekpyrosis* or conflagration,[105] linked with the biblical idea of judgment.

2.3.3 The Reception of the Idea of Conflagration (*Ekpyrosis*)

The idea of a burning of the world by fire was widespread in the Greco-Roman world. Based on philosophical reflections about fire as the principle of the world (Heraclitus), the Stoics made it a central notion in their cosmology. Cicero (*Nat. d.* 2:118) reports the view that in the end the whole world will burn in fire, but, because the fire is living and divine, it will also bring about the renewal of the world with the same order arising once again. Thus, the conflagration could be linked with the idea of eternal recurrence, governed by the cycle of the starred sky in the 'Great Year.' The implication is the idea of an eternal sequence of numerous worlds, destroyed and recreated again by fire. According to some views (possibly coming from Egypt), the water was also considered a means of destruction. When referring to the myth of Phaeton (*Tim.* 22c), Plato states that there were many destructions of humanity and that many others will follow, the most dangerous of which are by fire and water. Even Lucretius, who was not a Stoic but an Epicurean, connects an event of destruction by fire (through Phaeton) with another event of destruction by flood: The world is not eternal; instead heaven, earth, and waters can be destroyed by water and fire (Lucretius, *Rer.* 5.392–410; 411–415).

105 On the idea of the *ekpyrosis*, see Knut Usener, "Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur," in *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, ed. Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, BTS 137 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013), 149–81; on the Jewish and Christian reception of the idea see in particular Pieter W. van der Horst, "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity," in *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 227–51.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

As Pieter van der Horst has convincingly shown, the idea of the conflagration was rather difficult for ancient Jewish (and likewise for ancient Christian) thought. Of course, the Scriptures know of the idea of judgment by fire, but judgment always implies a distinction between the just and the wicked. The conflagration, however, does not make such a distinction: everything is dissolved in fire, and the burning functions more as purification than as punishment. As a result, ancient Jewish authors were generally very reluctant to adopt the idea of a general conflagration. The only Jewish texts that accept this notion are the Sibylline Oracles (Or. Sib. 3.80–92; probably somewhat later 2:194–219; 4:171–89; 5:209–13), which are early Jewish texts that probably originate in Egypt.[106] It is therefore no coincidence that the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which adopts a number of Egyptian elements and probably also originates in Egypt, likewise adopts the imagery of conflagration. Apart from the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the very brief hint in 2 Clem 16:3, 2 Peter is the earliest Christian testimony that plainly features the idea of a cosmic conflagration.[107] This is a further confirmation of the suggestion by Wolfgang Grünstäudl that 2 Peter must be situated in an Alexandrian milieu.

By adopting the idea of conflagration and associating it closely with the past deluge, the author of 2 Peter provides an eschatological perspective that coheres quite well with the cosmological discourses of Stoics and Epicureans. He not only defends an early Christian 'dogma,' but enters a dialogue with the sceptics and draws on a wider cosmological debate. He shows that the world is not immutable but had already been subject to destruction by water. As a result, the alleged 'eternity of the world' cannot serve as an argument against the expectation that the world will again undergo destruction, this time by fire.

The expectation of the coming day of the Lord, the fire of judgment, and the 'rebirth' of a new creation is thus presented in a manner that is coherent with contemporary cosmological thought. Apocalyptic imagery, as drawn from biblical texts and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, is embedded in a framework of Hellenistic cosmology, albeit with significant modifications:

> a) Any kind of dated expectation is clearly rejected, as the divine works cannot be measured by human time (cf. 2 Pet 3:9).
> b) Furthermore, the conflagration is not a mere purification of the world but belongs to the last judgment, or—more precisely—it is understood

106 On the Sibylline Oracles, cf. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles*. The texts are presented and extensively discussed in Adams, *Stars*, 88–96 and in Frey, *Brief*, 335–36 (= *Letter*, 396–97).

107 Cf. also Justin, *1 Apol.* 20.1–2; 60.8; Tatian, *Or. Graec.* 25:6; Tertullian, *Spect.* 30 and Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 5.121–22.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

as a preparation for the judgment of humans according to their works. The conflagration is, therefore, not the end itself, but it is followed by the last judgment.

c) Finally, there is not an infinite sequence of worlds but only a sequence of three worlds, namely, the antediluvian, the present, and the 'new' creation. The order that will arise after the coming judgment will not be the same as before, but will be a world that radically differs from the present and is characterized no more by sin or corruptibility, but by 'justice.'

2.4 *The Preparation of the Eschatological Argument in 2 Peter 1–2*

From the argument in 2 Pet 3:5–13, we can now move to the earlier parts of the letter. Although the main eschatological topic is not introduced until 2 Pet 3:4, it is already anticipated in a number of earlier passages.

a) The term παρουσία is introduced in the context of the brief reference to Christ's transfiguration. Based on the eyewitness testimony of the apostles, their preaching is summarized as focused on "the power and *coming* of Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 1:16). The transfiguration scene is the only event from Jesus's earthly ministry which is mentioned in 2 Peter. For the author's Christology it is quite fundamental, since he stresses Christ's glory as revealed to the apostles *in that scene*. Christ's glory and divinity are a precondition for his eschatological function as judge and savior. In the author's view, the rejection of Christ's parousia and his eschatological judgment also implies a disregard for his actual divine majesty. The transfiguration episode is thus interpreted as an act of glorification in which Jesus receives his divine glory from the Father and the apostles are eyewitnesses of this. For the author, the transfiguration scene is the fundamental proof of Jesus's eschatological power and authority.

It is not unimportant to note that the transfiguration on the "holy mountain" is also narrated in the *Apocalypse of Peter* (Apoc. Pet. 15–17). Thus, the author is again influenced by the *Apocalypse of Peter*, where the transfiguration is presented in a post-Easter setting and thus even more strongly reflects the aspect of eschatological glory. While in the *Apocalypse of Peter* the vision focuses on the glorification of Moses and Elijah and the eschatological glorification of the elect, the author of 2 Peter adopts the heavenly voice from the Synoptic account and interprets the voice as a divine act of proclamation (2 Pet 1:17) by which Jesus has been given the divine glory. In the dense epistolary context, the reference is very brief and strictly fits the author's interests.

b) Immediately after the mention of the transfiguration, the author stresses the validity and reliability of the "prophetic word" (2 Pet 1:19), which is said to be confirmed through the revelation of the glory of Christ, as witnessed by

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the apostles. In conformity with a more general tendency in early Christian tradition, the fulfilment of certain biblical predictions in the Christ-event is considered confirmation of the validity of other still unfulfilled prophecies, including the eschatological expectation. Thus, biblical prophecies and "the promise of his coming" (2 Pet 3:4) form a common group of testimonies, and the addressees are exhorted to pay attention to the "prophetic word," i.e., to biblical prophecy. Although 2 Peter never openly quotes the prophets, they are highly esteemed; the final eschatological outlook—the hope for "new heavens and new earth" in 2 Pet 3:13—is thus directly influenced by the eschatological horizon of Isaiah 65–66.

The prophetic word is further compared to a lamp shining in a dark and frightening place until the day dawns (2 Pet 1:19), giving orientation in the present until the end comes. The addressees are thus called to consider prophecy as divinely inspired and therefore reliable for the present as well as the future. Although the hope of the parousia is not explicitly associated with biblical (or even early Christian)[108] prophecy at this point, this passage clearly anticipates the eschatological argument of chapter 3.

c) From the series of biblical examples of judgment and salvation (2 Pet 2:4–10a), partly taken from Jude, the author concludes that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly and to judge the sinners (2 Pet 2:9). Although this is said generally—not with a particular reference to the eschatological judgment, and the examples from Scripture present acts of judgment and deliverance from the biblical past—the argument clearly aims at the eschatological power of 'the Lord.' Whereas the examples in Jude 5–7 merely illustrate a judgment of sinners,[109] it is worth noting that 2 Peter adopts two of the examples of judgment (the flood and Sodom) from Jude and inserts two 'exemptions' or examples of God's rescuing power (Noah and Lot). For the addressees the focus changes from wrath to deliverance, now and then. Thus, the sequence of biblical examples also prepares for the argument in 2 Peter 3.

108 Notably, prophets and prophecy seem to be limited to the biblical period. For the time of the church, the author only mentions teachers and false teachers. Likewise, the function of the Holy Spirit is limited to the biblical period and the inspiration of the prophets (2 Pet 1:21). Given the central place of prophecy in early Christianity, this observation requires explanation. It seems to be an attempt at 'domesticating' prophecy, possibly due to the disagreement with other teachers or 'prophets' the author had to face; see Frey, *Brief*, 203 (= *Letter*, 241); on the domestication of prophecy, see also Jan N. Bremmer, "The Domestication of Early Christian Prophecy and the Ascension of Isaiah," in *The Ascension of Isaiah*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer, Thomas R. Karmann, and Tobias Nicklas, Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha 11 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 1–22.

109 According to Jude, the judgment of 'such' sinners is already prefigured or even prewritten in the Scriptures (including Enoch); cf. Jude 3–4.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

d) The urgency of the exhortation that the addressees distance themselves from the false teachers is further confirmed in several remarks about the judgment of such sinners, which is neither "idle" nor "asleep" (2 Pet 2:3). Interestingly, the judgment or condemnation is described almost as an acting, living being. We might speculate whether this sets up a contrast with an understanding of God as inactive or even 'sleeping.'[110] Should we assume that the opponents said that the judgment (and the parousia) 'is asleep' and therefore not to fear? Or more generally, did they question God's activity in the world? Of course, this must remain speculative, and it is not very plausible that the opponents held an Epicurean view of God,[111] although the author might want to polemically depict them in Epicurean colors.

The primary aim of the passages confirms that the judgment of such sinful people will certainly come, and that they will face destruction. The author adopts this point from the polemical argument in Jude, and in his own polemical section of chapter 2, several subsections lead to the final expression of judgment (2 Pet 2:1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12, 17, 21). In contrast to the predominantly negative argument in Jude, however, the positive expectation of salvation and new creation takes up more space in 2 Peter. The author expects his addressees to attain final salvation, and he exhorts them to do everything that is necessary for this. This is particularly the focus of the introductory section in 2 Pet 1:3–11 with its concluding perspective of "entry into the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ" (1:11).

2.5 *The Images of Salvation and the Issue of Coherence*

But how are the various images of salvation connected? Can they be understood as part of a coherent eschatological imagination? This question must be posed in light of the differences between the "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Pet 3:13) and the final entry into Christ's eternal kingdom (2 Pet 1:11), as well as between the kingdom-image of 2 Pet 1 and the idea of escaping the corruption in the world and becoming partakers of the divine nature found in 2 Pet 1:4. How do these images interrelate, and how is salvation conceptualized in 2 Peter?

110 The idea that a God 'sleeps' is also rooted in the biblical polemics against idols (cf. 1 Kgs 28:27; in contrast with this Ps 121:4; Jer 5:27).

111 See the interesting argument by Jerome H. Neyrey, who points to parallels in Plutarch's writing *De sera numinis vindicta* (548C and 549B); cf. Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 37C (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 231; cf. also Frey, *Brief*, 194–95 (= *Letter*, 230–31), and "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ," 509–10.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2.5.1 "New Heavens and a New Earth": The Final New Creation

There is, first, the pivotal image of salvation in 2 Pet 3:13: After the collapse of the present creation ("heavens and earth"), the parousia of Christ, and the Last Judgment, the author imagines a 'new creation' in marked contrast to the previous images of destruction. The expression adopts the prophetic language of LXX Isa 65:17 and 66:22, although the LXX does not use the plural "heavens," but rather the singular "the new heaven and the new earth" (ὁ οὐρανὸς καινὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ καινή). This final expression of God's power to create "new things" (Isa 43:19) in the final chapters of Isaiah provides the most far-reaching expression of eschatology in the Old Testament, and is adopted in a number of early Jewish writings, including the *Apocalypse of Weeks* in 1 Enoch 91.16 and Ps.-Philo *L.A.B.* 3.10, whereas others only mention a "new creation" (cf. Jub 1:29; 4:26; 4 Ezra 7:30–31; 2 Bar 32:6; 44:12) or a "new nature" (Sib. Or. 5.212). In the New Testament, "a new heaven and a new earth" is envisaged in Rev 21:1a, where the "first heaven, earth, and sea have passed away" (Rev 21:1b).

Second Peter, then, comes close to the final outlook of Revelation, although the details differ. Whereas Isa 65:17 and 66:22 and numerous other early Jewish texts still imagine a renewal of the present creation, Revelation (cf. also Rev 20:11) seems to imagine a totally new creation after the disappearance of the former one, although the new world and in particular the New Jerusalem is also comparable to the present.[112] Second Peter approximates Revelation's rhetoric of destruction and newness, but certain differences due to 2 Peter's Greco-Roman cosmological background are apparent: The present world has not totally disappeared but has melted in fire, so that the author may also consider a continuity with regard to the 'substance' of the 'new creation.'[113] The quality of the "new heavens and earth," however, is totally different, characterized not

112 The debate about the possibility of a total annihilation of the present world in early Jewish (and Christian) traditions cannot be examined here; see recently Mark B. Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal? The Meaning and Function of New Creation in the Book of Revelation*, WUNT 2/307 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), and, for a different perspective, Adams, *Stars*. Perhaps some exegetes who deny the possibility of a completely 'new creation'—trying to 'rescue' the aspect of renewal from various texts of the Hebrew Bible into Jewish apocalypticism (e.g., 4 Ezra; cf. Revelation)—are motivated by theological default settings. In the texts, the imagination varies considerably. In my view, Revelation clearly considers a disappearance of the present world; see Jörg Frey, "Was erwartet die Johannesapokalypse? Zur Eschatologie des letzten Buchs der Bibel," in *Die Johannesapokalypse: Kontexte—Konzepte—Rezeption*, ed. Jörg Frey, James A. Kelhoffer, and Franz Tóth, WUNT 287 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 542–43, and also Adams, *Stars*, 236–39.

113 Cf. Adams, *Stars*, 233.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

by sin and corruption (2 Pet 1:4) but by justice (2 Pet 3:13) and incorruptibility. Here, the author most clearly 'corrects' the Stoic concepts.

The imagery is, therefore, terminologically based on the Scriptures but has been strongly reshaped by the cosmological ideas the author adopts. The prophetic promise is almost as strongly reinterpreted as the narrative of the flood. And like the conflagration, the new creation appears unrelated to Christ.

2.5.2 Entering Christ's Eternal Kingdom (2 Pet 1:11)

The image of entering the Kingdom provides a different concept of space, one in which the final salvation is conceptualized as a transfer to another space of eternal quality, a space which is thought to be an otherworldly present rather than a future, new creation. The image of entering the Kingdom is more directly based on the early Christian tradition, ultimately rooted in the proclamation of Jesus. Nevertheless, the language of entering the Kingdom is transformed. A few aspects should be emphasized:

a) The term εἴσοδος draws on Jesus's sayings about 'entering' (εἰσέρχεσθαι / εἰσπορεύεσθαι) the Kingdom of God from the Gospels.[114] Particularly in the Gospel of Matthew, the sayings present criteria for the admission to the Kingdom (or to 'eternal life'[115]) at the coming judgment. Whereas those sayings imagine an individual admission, the promise in 2 Pet 1:11 seems to point to the entry of a group, i.e., of those who without stumbling or falling away have reached the goal of their earthly journey and are now granted a triumphal entry. This aspect finds confirmation in the *Apocalypse of Peter*: the term "eternal kingdom of Christ" is only paralleled in Apoc. Pet. 14:4 (E and R),[116] and in that case the image of the final entry is of Jesus who enters into his "eternal kingdom" *together with his elect and the patriarchs*.[117] This is the triumph of the conquerors into the eternal realm.

b) In contrast to the earlier Jesus tradition, the Kingdom that is entered is no longer called the Kingdom of God[118] but the Kingdom of Christ. This

114 Cf. Mark 9:47; 10:15 with parallels; 10:23–25 with parallels, and Matt 5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 23:13. See also John 3:5 and Acts 14:22. In the Synoptics, the verbs εἰσέρχεσθαι and εἰσπορεύεσθαι are used rather than the noun εἴσοδος.

115 Cf. Mark 9:43, 45 // Matt 18:8–9 and Matt 19:17.

116 Cf. Frey, *Brief*, 237 (= *Letter*, 281–82); on the passages in Justin Martyr, which are more strongly related to Dan 7, see Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 305.

117 See the text according to the Greek fragment P. Vindob. G 39756 in Kraus and Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse*, 126–28.

118 Cf. Herm. Sim. 9.12.3–8; 16:2–4; 2 Clem 6:9 and 11:7.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

transformation is rooted in earlier texts, most clearly in the Gospel of John where the notion of the Kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5) is transposed into the idea of Jesus as a king whose kingdom is "not from this world" (John 18:36–37).[119] However, when texts of the late first or second century mention the Kingdom or reign of Christ, they rather say that it "appears" (2 Tim 4:1) or that the faithful are already "transferred" to that Kingdom (Col 1:13). Only the 'Paul' of 2 Tim 4:18 says that the Lord will bring him safely to his heavenly Kingdom. An "entry" (εἴσοδος) into Christ's Kingdom is first mentioned in 2 Peter 1:11, and the closest parallel is Apoc. Pet. 14:4, where Jesus promises that he will "depart" together with his rejoicing elect and the patriarchs "to my eternal Kingdom." This is adopted in 2 Peter 1:11.

c) Quite unique in 2 Pet 1:11 and in Apoc. Pet. 14:4 is the expression "eternal Kingdom." Of course, the biblical tradition is aware of the eternal Kingdom of God.[120] Whereas God's Kingdom can be called eternal, the reign of Christ or of the Messiah is always temporally limited.[121] Only Heb 12:28 mentions an "unshakeable" Kingdom that is not part of the transient world. But Hebrews still points to the Kingdom of God, whereas 2 Peter 1:11—paralleled only by the *Apocalypse of Peter*—speaks of an "eternal Kingdom of Christ."

In the opening part of 2 Peter, this is the final eschatological perspective for the faithful addressees. For those who produce virtue and do not 'stumble' on their way, the entry into "the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" will be richly provided. The promise is embedded in a strongly paraenetic context: A catalogue of virtues is presented to exhort the addressees to produce virtue and in so doing confirm their calling in order to be granted entrance to Jesus's eternal Kingdom. The alternative is clear: If their faith is idle and unproductive, they will stumble and have no share in the final salvation.

2.5.3 Becoming Partakers of the Divine Nature and Escaping the Corruption in the World (2 Pet 1:4)

The problems of the soteriological and ethical structure underlying that passage will be discussed below. Before turning to those issues, we have to look more closely at the first 'image' of salvation, presented in the extended prescript

119 Cf. also Eph 5:5; Col 1:13; Heb 1:8; 2 Tim 4:1, 18.

120 Dan 3:33; 7:27; cf. 4:34 Theodotion; 7:27 Theodotion and LXX.

121 Cf. 4 Ezra 7:28; 1 Cor 15:23–28; Rev 20:1–6. See further Frey, "Was erwartet die Johannesapokalypse?" 515–16.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of the letter (2 Pet 1:4), which states that the addressees may "become partakers of the divine nature (ἵνα … γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως), having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of desire" (2 Pet 1:4).

This phrase, in particular the expression ἵνα … γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως, has proved to be one of the most difficult *cruces interpretum* of the letter. Because of this phrase, exegetes have accused the author of relapsing "into Hellenistic dualism"[122] or even a pagan concept of salvation, i.e., escaping from the material world and being transformed into a God-like nature.[123] Does this phrase imply the idea of a 'divinization' by mystic experiences, mystery initiation, or ascetic behavior? Does it express a hope for humans to actually become immortal or divine, or even an "apotheosis of humans"?[124] If this was the case, one could rightly ask how such a 'non-eschatological' view of salvation could be linked with the apocalyptic eschatology of 2 Peter 3.[125]

Before drawing such far-reaching conclusions, however, we must seek a correct understanding of the phrase and its context. The eschatological goal addressed in 1:11 should not be ignored, as it marks the climax of the whole passage. The idea of entering the eternal Kingdom of Christ, however, is no less apocalyptic than the idea of "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Pet 3:13). We therefore have to consider whether the idea in 2 Pet 1:4 is merely related to the present life and experience of Christians, and to what extent it might also relate to the eschatological completion, at least in connection with the subsequent expression concerning "escaping the corruption in the world." How is the eschatological horizon, unequivocally marked by 2 Pet 1:11, connected to the present status, experience, and ethical conduct of the addressees?

When seeking to understand the meaning of "becoming partakers in the divine nature" (γίνεσθαι θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως) in 2 Pet 1:4, we may begin with the subsequent phrase 'escaping the corruption that is in the world through desire' (ἀποφεύγειν τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς). The aorist participle ἀποφυγόντες suggests that "having escaped the corruption …" caused by sin is a kind of precondition or a step towards 'becoming partakers in the divine nature.' In any case, both ideas are quite closely linked in 2 Pet 1:4.

122 Käsemann, "Apologia," 180.

123 Käsemann, "Apologia," 180.

124 Thus, the harsh verdict in Wolfgang Schrage, "Der zweite Petrusbrief," in *Die "Katholischen" Briefe: die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas*, ed. Horst Robert Balz and Wolfgang Schrage, NTD 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 126; cf. already Käsemann, "Apologia," 180.

125 Helmut Koester, "Φύσις," *TDNT* 9:269 concludes, therefore, that the author's thought is simply incoherent.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The question then becomes whether 'corruption' (φθορά) and 'divine nature' (θεία φύσις) must be understood physically or ethically. Here, the mention of the ἐπιθυμία, the 'sinful desire' in the world, provides an important clue. The term shows that for the author, φθορά does not simply denote the perishability of the material world, but rather the mortality which is thought to be in the world because of human desire (i.e., because of sin), or even the eschatological destruction, which is caused by sinful behavior.[126] Therefore, escaping the corruption in the world does not primarily mean a transformation of a physical condition from human to 'divine' or from perishable to imperishable. In the eschatological context suggested by 2 Pet 1:11, it could be another expression for the final salvation, for the participation in the "eternal kingdom" and in the new creation that will no longer be under the threat of judgment and destruction. But there is also a strong connection with ethical conduct: 2 Pet 2:18 similarly explains that the new converts have 'escaped the defilements of the world' (ἀποφυγόντες τὰ μιάσματα τοῦ κόσμου). Thus, 'escaping the corruption that is in the world' might not only point to the final eschatological completion but even more strongly to a kind of conduct to which the addressees are now exhorted. As 2 Pet 1:5–11 clearly shows, participation in the final salvation—in the eternal kingdom and the new creation of justice—is dependent on an ethical lifestyle. Only on this reading can the phrase 'having escaped the corruption (through sin)' be a step towards or a precondition for 'partaking in the divine nature.'

From here, we can move to the interpretation of the phrase γίνεσθαι θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως. It is true that it might also imply an eschatological perspective for obtaining incorruptibility or immortality in Christ's eternal reign, although it seems inappropriate to understand this in terms of a substantial or mystic 'deification' (*theosis*). If the relation to the addressees' present situation is in focus, we should consider the ethical and paraenetic framework of 2 Pet 2:3–11 (and in particular vv. 5–11). If there is a connection between the present conduct and the eschatological destiny, the expression "speaks of taking on Christ's moral excellence starting now, and of sharing in Christ's eternal life following the Parousia."[127] In any case, the idea of partaking in the 'divine nature' is not

126 Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 182–83) hints at Eph 4:22 and 1 John 2:17. Although there is no hint of the biblical account of Gen 3, ἐπιθυμία clearly points to sin. In the LXX, the verb ἐπιθυμεῖν is frequently used for sin or sinful desire, most prominently in the versions of the Decalogue (Exod 20:17 and Deut 5:21), and thus it is also adopted in NT texts, including Rom 7:7; 13:9; and Matt 5:28.

127 Cf. James M. Starr, *Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in Its Hellenistic Context*, CBNT 33 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000), 232.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

merely an aspect of the eschatological expectation but also of the present life, particularly in ethical terms.

Such an ethical dimension of the expression θεία φύσις is also confirmed by its earlier usage in Greek literature.[128] According to Plato's *Critias*, the kings of Atlantis behaved differently, as long as they fully bore the "nature of the God" (Plato, *Critias*, 120d–121). In *Phaidros*, Plato explains that the human soul can partake of the divine, which implies a particular moral conduct characterized by the imitation of (the) god.[129] In Hellenistic Judaism, Philo and Josephus also use the expression θεία φύσις: Wisdom and mantic abilities can be a sign that someone partakes of the divine nature (*Ag. Ap.* 1.232), and kings—following the pattern of the 'divine nature' (οἱ μιμούμενοι τὴν θείαν φύσιν)—act morally (Philo, *Abr.* 144).[130] Evidently, 'divine nature' refers to the abilities, character, and the behavior of gods (in a Jewish context, of God), and partaking in the 'divine nature' occurs by imitating the respective actions, behavior, or conduct of the gods. Although these parallels are not constructed with the stem κοινων-, we cannot exclude such a meaning simply because of the variations in the terms used. Other early Christian parallels might even bridge the gap: Barn 19:8 mentions that the Christians should be κοινωνοί with regard to the incorruptible, and Ignatius ends a paraenetic phrase in Eph. 4:2 with "that you may all have communion with God" (ἵνα καὶ θεοῦ πάντοτε μετέχητε). In such a context, it is conceivable that the author of 2 Peter could also phrase that the Christians can become κοινωνοί of the 'nature' of God, viz. the divine savior Jesus Christ.

In view of these Greek, Hellenistic Jewish, and early Christian parallels, there is good reason to read the exhortation to become partakers of the 'divine nature' as an appeal to imitate the character and virtue of God and Christ, as mentioned in 2 Pet 1:3. When we interpret the verse within this context, 2 Peter does not present a "relapse" into Hellenistic dualism and it does not refer to divinization of humans. Instead, the text expresses, in strongly Hellenistic terms, the idea of the imitation of Christ by developing Christian virtues or a virtuous lifestyle. The author does not imagine a physical '*theosis*' of believers, but the final attainment of salvation and 'eternal life' with Christ by those who are not 'carried away' (2 Pet 3:17) but are 'found blameless' at the Last Judgment (2 Pet 3:14).

128 Cf. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 298–99, and Frey, *Brief*, 224 (= *Letter*, 266–67).

129 See the discussion in Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 299.

130 See Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 299.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3 Faith, Knowledge, and the Call for Christian Virtues: Soteriology and Ethics in 2 Peter

The previous section has demonstrated that consideration of 2 Peter's eschatology leads to a focus on ethical exhortation. From the beginning to the end, 2 Peter is concerned with Christian conduct and Christian virtues that are, or should be, the fruit of true faith. In the opening of the letter, the author states that Christ's divine power has given the faithful everything πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν, i.e., for a 'godly life'[131] (2 Pet 1:3), so that the Christians can—and should—add to their faith (2 Pet 1:5) a number of virtues (2 Pet 1:5–7). The final exhortation before the brief doxology exhorts the readers not to be carried away with the lawless people and not to fall away from their steadfastness (2 Pet 3:17).

While the "false teachers" (2 Pet 2:1) are accused of numerous moral sins, the addressees are warned not be seduced by their teaching and their conduct. Although we are not adequately informed about the details of the teaching of the opposed teachers, we may assume that the denial of Christ's parousia and last judgment—at least in the eyes of the author—could encourage a libertine lifestyle. The brief note in 2 Pet 2:19 that they promise "freedom" may confirm this view.[132] Another interesting connection, however, can be taken from the surprising reference to Paul and his epistles toward the end of 2 Peter (3:15–16). The fact that the author feels the need to mention Paul and to claim full agreement with "all the letters" of the "beloved brother" suggests that the opponents were somehow inspired by Paul or referred to him and his letters. Paul's epistles constituted a legacy that included teachings about 'freedom,'[133] which could be interpreted in various ways. The quest for ethics and soteriology, therefore, is also linked with the issue of Paul and "Peter" and the alleged canonical harmony between the two.

We will therefore take a closer look at the paraenetic structure of the author's argument and his call for Christian virtues. In a second step, we will discuss his understanding of faith as it relates to knowledge and virtues, before returning to the relationship between 2 Peter and Paul, and the reference to Paul's letters and its function within the author's argument.

131 The term should be read as a hendiadys.

132 For discussion, see Frey, *Brief*, 301–02 (= *Letter*, 356–57).

133 Cf. Rom 8:21; 1 Cor 10:29; 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 2:4; 5:1, 13. The closest terminological connection is with Rom 8:20–21 (cf. also Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 458–59).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3.1 *The Call for Christian Virtues: the Paraenetic Structure of 2 Peter 1:3–11*

In the epistolary prescript, the author addresses his readers as "all those who have obtained an equally valid faith" (2 Pet 1:2)—that is, as all true Christians. This prescript is extended in a remarkable manner: syntactically, the *salutatio* does not end with the blessing in v. 2 but is continued by an extensive comparative phrase in vv. 3–4. On the other hand, vv. 3–4 provide the starting point for the further exhortation in vv. 5–11.[134]

Although the textual structure is somewhat ambiguous, the logical connection between v. 2 and vv. 3–4 is clear: "Grace and peace shall be multiplied" among the addressees "in the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus" (v. 2), "as" (ὡς), that is, "in the same manner as" or even "because,"[135] "his divine power has given us all things that pertain to a godly life through the knowledge of the one who called us" (v. 3). The basis is characterized as a divine gift rooted in the ἐπίγνωσις of God or Christ, but the aim is "life and godliness," viz. a godly life.[136] The gift of the knowledge of Christ ('faith') leads to a corresponding lifestyle. Christians have now 'escaped' a sinful life (cf. 2 Pet 2:18: Christians are 'escaping' the sinful life and its defilements and live in imitation of Christ). This will finally lead to their obtaining eternal salvation and entry into Christ's eternal kingdom.

An analogous structure occurs again in the transition from vv. 3–4 to vv. 5–11: Having mentioned that Christ has called us by his own δόξα καὶ ἀρετή (2 Pet 1:3),[137] the addressees are admonished to add to their faith "virtue" (ἀρετή). Translators have often hesitated to translate the term ἀρετή in both cases as "virtue." Instead, they have chosen different renderings in vv. 3 and 5, because they considered it unusual that ἀρετή is used both for humans and for Christ. The correspondence, however, is not coincidental but rather deliberate. In Hellenistic Jewish texts (and also in 1 Pet 2:9), ἀρετή is used with regard to God, the highest 'form' of virtue.[138] Thus, the usage with regard to Christ in 2 Pet 1:3 can be easily understood as a transfer of a divine epithet from God to Christ. Christ represents the highest moral standard; he has shown himself 'virtuous,' in particular by calling the Christians and giving them gracious gifts. But with the reference to Christ's gracious benefactions, another explanation

134 Thus, a number of interpreters see vv. 3–11 as a proem, although this is not in accordance with the syntactical structure. See the discussion in Frey, *Brief*, 209 and 227 (= *Letter*, 249 and 269); more extensively Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 258–65.

135 Thus Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 401 and 403.

136 ζωὴ καὶ εὐσέβεια can be interpreted as a hendiadys.

137 This might also be a hendiadys, although both options carry some weight.

138 See Josephus, *J. W.* 22–23, *Ant.* 17.130; Philo, *Leg.* 2.14. Cf. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 292.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

comes to the fore: The double expression δόξα καὶ ἀρετή is well attested in Greek literature (e.g., Diodorus Siculus and especially Plutarch) for the positive characterization of a person.[139] Both terms are also used together in honorary inscriptions. In this context, ἀρετή points to heroic or virtuous deeds, and δόξα to the 'fame' a person has obtained through such deeds.[140] We might thus interpret δόξα in the present passage not with the meaning of splendor or divine glory—as is expected in the New Testament[141]—but in a more strongly Greco-Roman context as an expression of 'fame' or 'good reputation.'

An important observation by Frederick Danker confirms this. Danker shows that the general thought structure of 2 Pet 1:3–11 is similar to a common pattern in Greco-Roman honorary decrees praising benefactors, governors, and emperors.[142] Although the precise form may differ from case to case, such decrees—often visibly 'published' in inscriptions and therefore present in most urban contexts in the Greco-Roman world—usually mention the virtues and deeds of the person to be honored, followed by a decision of a council or voluntary association to honor that person by certain actions, processions, meals, etc.

In accordance with this general structure, 2 Pet 1:3–4 first mentions the benefactions the addressees received from Christ: "His divine power has granted us everything pertaining to life and godliness (or: a godly life), through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue (or: virtuous reputation). For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises …" Christ has called the believers and given them everything suitable for a godly, pious life. In this he showed his "divine power" and his "virtuous glory," or even his moral excellence.

As a consequence, v. 5 exhorts the addressees to make every effort to add to their faith "virtue." There is a close and deliberate correspondence between the "virtue" of Christ and the "virtue" the addressees are exhorted to develop. Accordingly, ἀρετή plays a pivotal role in the subsequent catalogue of virtues

139 See the discussion with examples in Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 293–94. In the Roman context, *honor* and *virtus* were even venerated as deities and appear together on coins; for references, see Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 314–15.

140 Cf. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 293.

141 Cf. Jörg Frey, "The Use of Δόξα in Paul and John as Shaped by the Septuagint," in *The Reception of Septuagint Words in Jewish-Hellenistic and Christian Literature*, ed. Eberhard Bons, Ralph Brucker, and Jan Joosten, WUNT 2/367 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 85–104.

142 Frederick W. Danker, "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree," *CBQ* 40 (1978): 64–82; according to pp. 65–66, "much of 2 Peter 1, and especially vv. 1–11, is impregnated with terminology used in a broad range of Hellenistic decrees."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(2 Pet 1:5–7),[143] which starts with πίστις and leads to ἀγάπη. It is the first fruit created by faith, the fruit that leads to (or even encompasses) all the other virtues, including knowledge, self-control (ἐγκράτεια), perseverance, piety (εὐσέβεια), brotherly love, and general love. From these terms, ἀρετή, εὐσέβεια, and ἐγκράτεια are also familiar from Hellenistic catalogues of virtues, but rarely used in catalogues from earliest Christianity. A distinctively Christian feature is that faith is the first and love the last climactic element of the present catalogue of virtues. This is matched by the phrase in Ignatius, Eph. 14:1: "The beginning is faith, and the end is love."

The structure presented here—familiar from honorary decrees for benefactors or other 'saviors'—is one of imitation and mimesis: Followers of Christ are called to imitate him in his moral, "virtuous" quality. Thus, v. 3 explicitly says that Christ has granted everything that leads to a pious life. Such a pious life—the attainment of virtues—is presented as a necessary precondition for being granted final salvation. On the other hand, Christ's "virtue" is manifest in his calling of the addressees into a relation with himself and graciously giving them divine gifts. These acts qualify him as a "virtuous" benefactor, so that the author can praise the 'moral excellence' or "virtue" of Christ. Furthermore, Christ's precious gifts seem also to enable the addressees to live such a 'pious life.' The manner in which the author imagines this is not explained; for example, there is no mention of 'breaking the power of sin,' as we might expect in Pauline literature. One reason for this may be that Christ's earthly mission and especially his death is apparently unimportant for the author's thought—at least it is not mentioned in the present context. The only 'activity' of Christ mentioned here is his 'calling' and 'giving gifts.'

It is therefore quite significant that the theological argument concerning the call to virtues is built on a thought structure the readers might know from their daily world, that is, from the correspondence between the virtue of a benefactor and the recipients of the gifts, who honor him with their lives. Thus, the initial ethical exhortation of the addressees, exhorting them to produce Christian virtues according to their Christian faith, takes its force not from biblical or theological reasoning but from a form of public communication that was probably familiar from public space and from the cultural code of *euergetism*, i.e.,

143 For further discussion, see Frey, *Brief*, 227–33 (= *Letter*, 270–75); more extensively Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 256–83, and J. Daryl Charles, *Virtue amidst Vice: The Catalog of Virtues in 2 Peter 1*, JSNTSup 150 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 138–48. The examples given by Danker include the decree honoring a benefactor named Theocles (Danker, "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree," 65; quoted also in Terrance Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter* [Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014], 55; cf. also the famous decree of Stratonicea [quoted in Ibid., 56]).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

honoring benefactors. Viewed in a historical perspective, this is a remarkable change compared to the earliest period of Christianity.[144] The basis of the ethical argument, or rather the means to create plausibility, is neither 'the law' nor 'the Scriptures,' neither the Christ event, nor a particular perception of time, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the idea of a pure community, but rather *a social practice from the Greco-Roman world*. This demonstrates how strongly the Christian discourse about the appropriate lifestyle has been embedded in and interacts with general discourses in the surrounding pagan world.

3.2 *Faith, Knowledge, and Virtues*

3.2.1 The General Structure of 2 Peter's Soteriology

Christ is thus presented as a divine benefactor.[145] His most important deed—as reported by 2 Peter—is that he called the addressees and gave them precious gifts and promises regarding their eschatological future. But now it is up to the addressees to confirm their calling by living their life corresponding to Christ's virtue (2 Pet 1:5). Furthermore, they are warned not to be idle, viz. 'without works' (ἀργός) and fruitless (ἄκαρπος) in their life (2 Pet 1:8) in order to avoid stumbling on their way and missing final salvation. "Works" and "virtues" are considered necessary for obtaining final salvation. Christ's promises are not yet realized in terms of eschatological salvation or 'eternal life' (as, e.g., in Paul or John[146]), but are rather given under the condition that they will live a Christian life. The status of the believers, therefore, is still 'on probation' and their eschatological fate remains uncertain until the last judgment. They have to be exhorted to keep themselves unblemished until the end. Clearly, the soteriology of 2 Peter is conditional. Its structure appears similar to Jas 2:21–24: Faith without works does not lead to salvation. Only if faith produces fruits, or, more precisely, virtues, will salvation be granted.

3.2.2 The Concept of "Faith"

What, then, is 'faith' in 2 Peter? We should first note that the term πίστις is not one of the author's favorite terms. In the whole letter, it is used only twice:

144 This is true, although the argument of benefaction and the image of a benefactor are already used in the Pauline correspondence, see Stephan Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection*, WUNT 2/124 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

145 This aspect also emphasized in the recent, brief commentary by Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor*.

146 See, e.g., Rom 5:1; 8:1; John 5:24; 11:25, etc. On life-giving faith in Paul and John, see now Nadine Ueberschaer, *Theologie des Lebens: Glaube und Leben bei Paulus und Johannes—ein theologisch-konzeptioneller Vergleich*, WUNT 389 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

in the prescript (2 Pet 1:1) and at the beginning of the catalogue of virtues (2 Pet 1:5). The verb πιστεύειν is not used at all in 2 Peter. This is quite remarkable, given the fact that by the beginning of the second century, πίστις (or also πιστεύειν) had become a very common term, denoting adherence to Christ and the status of being a Christian. The term is first attested in the Pauline Epistles (with the earliest mention in 1 Thess 1:2–3); it spread quickly into nearly all early Christian traditions, the Synoptics and the Johannine writings, somewhat differently in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and even James, where the term is discussed in relation to the "works" and, in my view, in a critical distance to Paul or the Pauline tradition.[147]

In comparison with other writings of the early second century, such as 1 Clement or the letters of Ignatius,[148] it is remarkable that 2 Peter rarely uses the term. But apart from πίστις, the author uses other expressions for the notion of 'being a Christian,' such as "knowing the 'way of justice'" (2 Pet 2:19), or "having come to the 'knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of … Christ" (2 Pet 2:20). Furthermore, there is some overlap between πίστις and other terms, such as ἐπίγνωσις (2 Pet 1:2–3, 8; 2:20) and γνῶσις (2 Pet 1:5–6; 3:18), εὐσέβεια (2 Pet 1:3, 6–7; 3:11), and in some manner also ἀρετή (2 Pet 1, 3, 5). Faith is therefore embedded into the tension between 'insight,' an intellectual dimension, and 'piety,' an ethical dimension. It is "a full knowledge of God and Jesus" and also "a dynamic reality," insofar as "it produces other things, such as favor and peace" (2 Pet 1:2) "and all things for life and piety" (2 Pet 1:3).[149]

Another observation should be noted: πίστις is only used with regard to humans. Unlike ἀρετή, which is also used with reference to Christ, πίστις is never linked to God or Christ in this letter. As Christ's earthly existence is almost never mentioned in 2 Peter, there is no need to reflect on Christ's 'faith' (unlike the author of Hebrews). God's 'faithfulness' is not expressed anywhere in the epistle with this term. If 2 Peter focuses on God's reliability, it is the reliability of the prophetic word, which includes both salvation and judgment. The idea,

147 See the argument below in paragraph 3.3.2.

148 On *pistis* in 1 Clement and Ignatius, see Wolfgang Grünstäudl, "Kontinuität und Innovation: Πίστις im Ersten Clemensbrief und den Ignatianen," in *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt*, ed. Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, WUNT 373 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 667–82. On 2 Clement, see James A. Kelhoffer, "Faith and Righteousness in Second Clement: Probing the Purported Influence of 'Late Judaism' and the Beginnings of 'Early Catholicism,'" in *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt*, ed. Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, WUNT 373 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 683–720.

149 Quotations from Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor*, 66.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

however, that God himself is 'faithful' (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 1:18, etc.) or that he is able and willing to 'preserve' the faithful (Jude 24) is not expressed in 2 Peter.[150]

The 'object' of faith remains unclear in the two pertinent passages (2 Pet 1:1 and 1:5): Is it oriented to God or to Jesus (as faith "in" Christ), or to a particular message or body of teachings and doctrines? Most probably, the author wants to include both possibilities.

πίστις is, therefore, a very general term for the state of being a Christian, which can include both faith and belief, the relationship and loyalty to Christ, the adherence to a certain body of teaching, and—most distinctively—the aspect of ethical conduct. Such a general usage also accords with later New Testament writings, including the Pastorals.[151] The aspect of loyalty as predominant in Romans' use of πίστις or *fides*[152] may be stressed when it is used at the beginning of a catalogue of virtues within a structure of correspondence between the virtue of Christ, the benefactor, and the expected virtues of those 'faithful' to him.

3.2.3 'Faith' as a Gift

One aspect, however, should not be underestimated: According to the letter's prescript, being a Christian is considered a divine gift: The readers are addressed as those "who have received a faith of the same value (ἰσότιμον … πίστιν) as ours." The term ἰσότιμος[153] usually expresses a status of equal rights or equal rank, often in political and other dimensions.[154] Thus, the letter is addressed to all 'orthodox' Christians, and the comparison of their faith with Peter's implies the idea of unity through the generations in the same true,

150 See the significant difference between 2 Pet 3:17 and Jude 24.

151 On "faith" in the Pastorals, see Bernhard Mutschler, *Glaube in den Pastoralbriefen: Pistis als Mitte christlicher Existenz*, WUNT 256 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

152 Cf. Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith:* Pistis *and* Fides *in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 60–65; Thomas Schumacher, *Zur Entstehung christlicher Sprache: eine Untersuchung der paulinischen Idiomatik und der Verwendung des Begriffes πίστις*, BBB 168 (Göttingen; Bonn: V&R Unipress; Bonn University Press, 2012), 276–81; Christian Strecker, "Fides—Pistis—Glaube: Kontexte und Konturen einer Theologie der „Annahme" bei Paulus," in *Lutherische und neue Pauluspersperktive: Beiträge zu einem Schlüsselproblem der gegenwärtigen exegetischen Diskussion*, ed. Michael Bachmann, WUNT 182 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 223–50.

153 The term is unique in the NT and unattested in the LXX, but it is used in Josephus, Philo, and Greco-Roman authors.

154 Cf. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, 333; Ceslas Spicq, *Notes de lexicographie néotestamentaire, Supplément*, OBO 22/3 (Fribourg; Göttingen: Éditions Universitaires; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 359–60.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

'apostolic' faith.[155] Most important, however, is the verb λαγχάνειν, which expresses that something is assigned by lot or divine attribution. Thus, the πίστις of the addressees, their status of being Christians, is considered a divine gift, an initial benefaction of God or Christ, their divine benefactor. Its foundation is not human dignity, activity, or quality, but rather the "righteous" gift of Christ.[156] Although 2 Peter does not discuss how faith begins or develops, or explain how it is rooted in the Christ event, the author shares the idea that faith is received as a gift, graciously granted by "our God and Savior Jesus Christ." But, as we will further discuss below, such a gift is never a mere gift without any implied obligations, but rather a gift that establishes a relation of loyalty, expected by the benefactor.

3.2.4 Faith and Knowledge: 'Personal Relationship'

Quite significant for the notion of πίστις in 2 Peter is the close relation between πίστις and (ἐπί)γνωσις. Immediately after the prescript introducing the gift of πίστις, 2 Pet 1:3 adds a parallel phrase: The faithful—Peter as well as the addressees—have obtained not only πίστις but also "everything pertaining to a godly life, through the true knowledge of him who called us by his own virtuous glory." The logic of this phrase can be reconstructed in two steps: Christ has called the addressees in his divine, virtuous glory, and with his call the addressees have obtained the knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of him who called them. Through this knowledge they have been granted everything that is necessary and suitable for a godly life. The 'knowledge of Christ' (ἐπίγνωσις) closely corresponds to 'faith' (πίστις). Both are granted through Christ and his calling. In its correspondence with ἐπίγνωσις, πίστις also takes the nuances of recognition, insight, and knowledge. Thus, "faith" includes a strongly intellectual dimension.

ἐπίγνωσις is more frequent and possibly more central in 2 Peter than πίστις. Unlike πίστις, however, ἐπίγνωσις has a personal object as God or Christ (1:2), the one "who has called us" (1:3), "our Lord Jesus Christ," or "our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2:20). Originating in philosophical discourses, ἐπίγνωσις was adopted in Christian contexts for religious and moral insights[157] and, most prominently, for the knowledge of God (Col 1:10; Eph 1:17; 4:13; Diogn. 10.1). As a term for the personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, ἐπίγνωσις is also a general term for the Christian existence, "Grundbegriff des

155 The closest parallel in the NT is Tit 1:4, where the fictive author Paul addresses Titus as a "son according to common faith."

156 In this context, δικαιοσύνη should be understood as a divine attribute of Christ, who acts rightly and generously as a divine benefactor in granting 'equal faith' to the addressees.

157 In the Pastorals, the object of insight is "the truth" (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Tim 2:25; 3:7; Tit 1:1); similarly, in Hebrews 10:26; cf. already Phlm 6: "every good thing."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

persönlichen Christentums,"[158] and thus an equivalent or possibly rather a complement to πίστις.

In some passages, ἐπίγνωσις is also close to the simplex γνῶσις, which is used quite positively in 2 Peter[159] and also later in Clement of Alexandria. There are differences, however: γνῶσις can also be used absolutely without a genitive, (thus in the catalogue of virtues 2 Pet 1:5–6), while in the final exhortation in 2 Pet 3:18, it is used like ἐπίγνωσις with a genitive τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. But this final phrase before the brief concluding doxology expresses an aspect of 'growth': The 'knowledge' of Christ is expected to grow; it is not confined to an initial recognition but confirmed and developed through practical life. In contrast to the 'unstable' (2 Pet 3:16), believers are expected to gain stability by practicing the Christian life.

Second Peter conceptualizes faith in more intellectual terms as a knowledge of Christ, an insight, or even a teaching. The knowledge of Christ is the precondition for "escaping the defilements of the world" (2 Pet 2:20; cf. 2 Pet 1:4), and is a step towards salvation. It would be inappropriate, however, to see that intellectual dimension of faith as 'knowledge of Christ' in contrast to the practical dimension of faith. Even the 'practical' term 'way of righteousness' is connected with the verb ἐπιγινώσκειν (2 Pet 2:21). Thus, faith is not merely a body of doctrinal sayings that has to be understood and acknowledged. Rather, the personal object of ἐπίγνωσις shows that such a knowledge is constituted by mutual relations of loyalty: The Christians have come to know Christ, they are drawn into a relation with him as their benefactor, savior, and Lord, and are now called to act accordingly in order to grow in their faith and to gain stability.

3.2.5 Faith and Virtues: The Pattern of Benefaction and Patronage

Second Peter's concept of faith is thus strongly oriented towards practical life and ethical conduct. This is clearly visible in the catalogue of virtues in 2 Pet 1:5–7, which starts with "faith" and aims at "love."[160] Apart from the particular form of a ladder, or, more precisely, a 'sorites,'[161] which suggests the one element is 'in' or grows from the preceding one, the general structure is clear:

158 Cf. Hans Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe*, ed. Herbert Preisker, 3rd ed., HNT 15 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1951), 84.

159 In contrast, see 1 Tim 6:20.

160 The question is whether πίστις is considered a virtue in itself, as the term occurs in a number of early Christian catalogues of virtues (cf. 1 Thess 1:3; Gal 5:22–23; 2 Cor 8:7; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22; 3:10; Rev 2:19). In the present context, however, it is presupposed that the addressees already have πίστις, whereas the other virtues are yet to be developed.

161 Cf. Frey, *Brief*, 227–28 (= *Letter*, 270); Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 280–81, and the fundamental essay by Henry A. Fischel, "The Use of the Sorites (*Climax, Gradatio*) in the Tannaitic Period," *HUCA* 44 (1973): 119–51.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The Christians have been granted faith and are now exhorted to give all diligence to add virtue (ἀρετή) to their faith. "Faith that is truly faith will produce virtues";[162] it leads to a life of virtues.

The use of the term ἀρετή, however, deserves some attention. The term is rare in early Christian catalogues of virtues,[163] but occurs quite regularly in analogous Hellenistic-Roman lists summing up all the various virtues. Though rarely used in the LXX, it was adopted in Hellenistic-Jewish writings in which aspects of Hellenistic-Roman moral philosophy were employed. In Philo ἀρετή can be used as the starting point of catalogues of virtues.[164] In Wisdom 8:7 it sums up the four cardinal virtues. In contrast to the very rare use in the New Testament, where, apart from 2 Peter, the term is adopted only once (Phil 4:8) in a 'moral' sense with regard to human virtues,[165] texts from the second century use it more frequently in the sense of distinctively 'Christian' ethics.[166] The adoption of the term in the opening of 2 Peter is a clear sign that this writing belongs to a second-century context and comes from a milieu in which Hellenistic education (possibly mediated through Hellenistic-Judaism) was present.

The term ἀρετή, however, is not only used for Christian virtues but also for the 'virtue' of the divine Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet 1:3); the text thus establishes "a relationship between God's (or rather Christ's [J.F.]) moral character and ours."[167] As Christ has demonstrated his virtue by granting divine gifts, Christians are now called to imitate their benefactor and master in producing corresponding virtues in order to reach final salvation.

The pattern of reciprocity is based upon the social code of beneficial patron relations. As James A. Kelhoffer has amply demonstrated in a study on 2 Clement,[168] "patronage relationships … were an integral part of ancient societies,"[169] so they can offer a model for understanding the idea of reciprocity between Christ the patron and his clients in 2 Peter. Generally, the relation to a benefactor implies some kind of reciprocity, so the receipt of gifts also implies the obligation to act in response to the gifts received. Even in completely asymmetrical relations, there is at least the expectation of recognition, praise,

162 Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor*, 67.
163 Cf. only Phil 4:8 and Herm. Mand. 12.3.1.
164 Philo, *Leg.* 2.64.
165 In 1 Pet 2:9, the term points to the benefactions of God.
166 2 Clem 10:1; Herm. Mand. 1.1.2; Herm. Sim. 6.1.4; 8.10.1.
167 Charles, *Virtue Amidst Vice*, 137.
168 James A. Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation: Christ as Salvific Patron and the Corresponding 'Payback' Expected of Christ's Earthly Clients According to the Second Letter of Clement," *NTS* 59 (2013): 433–56.
169 Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 455.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

or loyalty toward the patron or benefactor, which can also be considered a remuneration of the benefactor or patron.

In a thought structure quite similar to that of 2 Peter, 2 Clem 1:3 even speaks of an obligation of the Christians to give "repayment" (ἀντιμισθία) to Christ, the divine benefactor. The adoption of the widespread pattern of beneficial relations to describe the relations between Christ and his followers lends plausibility to the idea of reciprocity or an appropriate 'return,' which dominates the moral exhortation of the readers in 2 Peter. Second Clement actually provides some of the closest parallels to the soteriological thought structure of 2 Peter. Both letters share the idea that "believers can either confirm or lose their salvation" which is "not a *fait accompli* but requires the preservation of the patronage relationship between Christ (or God) and his earthly clients."[170] In 2 Peter, this is expressed by the idea that the readers have to "confirm" their calling (2 Pet 1:10) by developing corresponding virtues and living the godly life for which they are well-equipped by their divine benefactor.

3.3 *Between Paul and Patronage*

This soteriological structure is clearly reciprocal: If the addressees provide (ἐπιχορηγεῖν) virtues as a 'fruit' to their faith (2 Pet 1:5), they will be provided (ἐπιχορηγεῖν) "the entrance into the eternal kingdom," i.e., the fulfilment of the salvific promises (2 Pet 1:11). On the contrary, those who do not come with such virtues but remain idle and fruitless (1:8) will stumble (1:10). The faithful, who have received precious promises of salvation (1:4) and everything necessary for a pious life (1:3), are obliged to confirm their calling (1:10) by practicing a corresponding lifestyle in Christian virtues, in order to ultimately be granted the fulfilment of Christ's promises. It is the appropriate 'answer' to Christ's beneficial gifts and promises that will finally produce salvation.

3.3.1 The Critical Distance from Paul

This soteriological structure obviously differs from the views of Paul, for whom the gospel is a saving power (Rom 1:16) and gives life (cf. Rom 6:8, etc.), as well as from the teaching of the Fourth Gospel, according to which believers "have" eternal life, because they are already transferred from the realm of death to the realm of life (John 5:24; 11:25). According to 2 Peter, salvation has not yet happened; it will only be granted on the day of judgment when God (or Christ) can save the pious from the suffering among the impious (2 Pet 2:9) and provide them the glorious entry into his kingdom. Thus, the predominant tune of

170 Thus Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 455.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Peter is not the joy about salvation, but rather the urgent warning in view of the coming conflagration, the *dies irae*, and the judgment according to works.

Of course, Paul is also aware of a judgment by works (Rom 2:5–9) and in his epistles the idea of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–23), the exhortation to a new lifestyle (Rom 12:1–2), and the expression of a 'law of Christ' (Gal 6:2) have a prominent place. Evidently, even for Paul, faith 'without works' (here in particular: of the Law) is not an idle and fruitless faith. Nevertheless, there is a marked contrast between Paul's assertion that nothing can separate those in Christ from Christ's love (Rom 8:37–38) and 2 Peter's ethical exhortation to guard themselves (2 Pet 3:17) in order to be found 'unblemished' (2 Peter 3:14), without a clear reference to the saving work of Christ in his death and resurrection.

Many interpreters, particularly in the tradition of German Protestantism, have criticized 2 Peter as teaching 'synergism' or 'righteousness by works' in marked contrast to the essence of the gospel they find in the genuine teachings of Paul.[171] More recent discussions, however,[172] have demonstrated that the verdict of 'Early Catholicism' cannot sufficiently explain the present letter nor decide on the theological legacy of its argument. Writings such a 2 Peter deserve to be read on their own terms and not simply in comparison to the Pauline gospel. But it would also be inappropriate to 'harmonize' the dissenting views within the New Testament canon or to consider them as merely 'complementary' voices. Second Peter and Paul take very different, or even contradictory stances on salvation and ethics, and we should not ignore the hermeneutical problems involved,[173] but rather try to understand the author's viewpoint from his situation and the legacy of his argument from the terms he adopts.

3.3.2 Second Peter as a Writing in the Line of James and Jude

As already mentioned, the soteriological structure of 2 Peter is much more in accordance with the relation between faith and 'works' as presented in Jas 2:14–16:[174] Faith without works does not save. It is still an open question whether the argument in James 2 is simply based on Jewish and Jewish-Christian

171 Cf. Käsemann, "Apologia."

172 Cf. the literature mentioned above, note 12; see also Frey, *Brief*, 139–40 (= *Letter*, 164–65).

173 On the theological problems of 2 Peter, see also Jörg Frey, "Hermeneutical Problems Posed by 2 Peter," in *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, ed. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, WUNT 397 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 9–36.

174 Thus also Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor*, 67.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

traditions,[175] or whether it is more explicitly directed against Paul or a certain kind of Paulinism.[176] As the relationship between "faith" and "works" is never explicitly discussed in Jewish literature before James, it seems more plausible that the author reacts to a (possibly exaggerated or misunderstood) kind of Paulinism. But James is very rarely alluded to in early Christian literature, and we have no indication that the author of 2 Peter actually draws on James.

Things are somewhat different with the Epistle of Jude, which is so heavily adopted by 2 Peter. There is some plausibility that the Epistle of Jude in its adoption of the authority of James, the brother of the Lord (Jude 1), draws on the 'literary James' rather than on the historical figure of James, the leader of the Jerusalem community.[177] Not only the rejection of those who disregard angelic beings but also the criticism of people who "turn grace into licentiousness" (Jude 4) may imply a critical stance towards Pauline teachings. With the adoption of the Epistle of Jude, the author of 2 Peter seems to draw on a line of argument deliberately phrased in critical distance to the Pauline tradition. This is also confirmed by the polemical characterization of the opponents' teaching with the term "freedom" in 2 Pet 2:19. If the 'false teachers' not only deny the eschatological expectation but also proclaim "freedom" in a manner that results—in the author's view—in an immoral lifestyle, and if they misunderstand or "distort" Paul's letters (2 Pet 3:16), then the author of 2 Peter links himself to a line of thought in critical distance from Paul.

Apart from all those uncertain historical connections, the soteriology of 2 Peter accords with James and Jude in the paraenetic call for 'good works' and 'virtues,' and in a marked opposition to a preaching of salvation merely by divine grace but without appropriate conduct. Instead, 2 Peter clearly states that faith without virtues is worthless and will not lead to salvation. 'Christians' who do not produce these virtues are shortsighted and blind (2 Pet 1:9) and will stumble and ultimately fail to obtain salvation.

175 Thus, some recent authors on James, including Christoph Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, HNT 15/1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 125–26; Matthias Konradt, "Der Jakobusbrief im frühchristlichen Kontext," in *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*, ed. Jacques Schlosser, BETL 176 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 189, and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, "'A New Perspective on James?' Neue Forschungen zum Jakobusbrief," *TLZ* 129 (2004): 1041.

176 Thus, in my view convincingly, Friedrich Avemarie, "Die Werke des Gesetzes im Spiegel des Jakobusbriefs. A Very Old Perspective on Paul," *ZTK* 98 (2001): 282–309, and also Dale C. Allison Jr., *James*, ICC (London; New York: Bloomsbury; T&T Clark, 2013), 453.

177 Cf. Frey, "The Epistle of Jude Between Judaism and Hellenism," 324–26.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3.3.3 A Short Glimpse at the *Apocalypse of Peter* and Jude

At this point, another glimpse at the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the Epistle of Jude may help to describe the stern character of 2 Peter's teaching more clearly.

The *Apocalypse of Peter* seems to consider that not only the elect but also some sinners will be granted the final entry into Christ's eternal kingdom. They will find grace due to the prayers of the elect and by an obscure kind of purification through the "baptism in the Acherusian Lake."[178] When 2 Peter adopts an image of the eternal Kingdom of Christ and the triumphal entry of the elect (2 Pet 2:11) from the passage, the author leaves aside the idea of a further post-mortem purification or an effective prayer of the elect for the sinners. Such a "second chance" would in fact weaken his ethical argument and thus undermine the stern character of his exhortation.

But the author not only omits the enigmatic tradition of the "baptism in the Acherusian lake." The same tendency can also be observed in comparison with the Epistle of Jude: Whereas the closing doxology of Jude expresses the confidence that God can preserve the addressees from stumbling and present them blameless before the presence of his glory (Jude 24), 2 Peter ends quite differently. The final exhortation before the brief doxology (2 Pet 3:18) only admonishes the addressees to guard themselves from being led away from the truth (2 Pet 3:17) in order to be found unblemished before the judge (2 Pet 3:14). Any notion of God's preserving power goes unmentioned. Again, the author omits an element from his sources in order not to weaken the exhortation to his addressees. Being 'faithful' to Christ, they are obliged to respond appropriately to his grace. The responsibility for obtaining salvation is now fully up to them.

3.3.4 The Thought Pattern of Patronage and Reciprocity—2 Clement as Analogy

From here, we return to the idea of reciprocity as customary in the Greco-Roman context of patronage and beneficial relations, which is introduced in the beginning of the letter in 2 Pet 1:3–11 and may be the decisive clue for understanding 2 Peter's thought structure. This can be illustrated from 2 Clement, which provides a roughly contemporary parallel and corresponds to several aspects of 2 Peter. In 2 Clement, the reciprocal structure of faith and Christian existence is repeatedly stressed in order to exhort the addressees:[179]

178 Cf. Thomas J. Kraus, "Fürbitte für die Toten im frühen Christentum: 'Ich werde … den gewähren, den sie aus der Strafe erbitten,'" in *Das Gebet im Neuen Testament*, ed. Hans Klein et al., WUNT 249 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 355–96. On the background of the idea see Thomas J. Kraus, "Acherousia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext," *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

179 For the following passages, see in particular Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 447–54.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

In the opening of 2 Clement, Christ is presented as "God" (2 Clem 1:1), as "judge" (2 Clem 1:1) and as "savior" (2 Clem 1:4, 7), and the author explicitly uses the terms "payment" (μισθός, 2 Clem 1:5) and "repayment" (ἀντιμισθία, 2 Clem 1:3, 5; cf. 9:7; 15:2) to focus on the appropriate actions believers are now expected to offer in return for the salvation they received. There is an almost quantitative correspondence between benefits received, the appropriate return, and the reward expected (2 Clem 1:3). The believers have received a "great and wonderful" promise (ἐπαγγελία, 2 Clem 5:5; cf. 2 Petr 1:3), the "rest of the kingdom to come" (2 Clem 5:5; cf. 2 Petr 1:11). Those who will not answer appropriately do not adequately understand the salvation granted to them (2 Clem 1:2, 6; cf. 2 Petr 1:8). As in 2 Peter, faith is closely connected with knowledge or appropriate understanding and with ethical conduct.

As in 2 Peter, the fundamental act of salvation is that Christ "called" the addressees (2 Clem 1:8; 2:7; 5:1; 9:5) in an act of grace and mercy (ἔλεος, 2 Clem 3:1; cf. 1:7). Believers are now expected to remunerate Christ in various ways, such as by "praise" (2 Clem 1:5a), joy (2 Clem 2:1), refraining from idolatry (2 Clem 3:1), and confessing Christ (2 Clem 3:2–3; 4:3), in particular by "doing what he says" (2 Clem 3:4). They must "live a holy and righteous life" (2 Clem 5:6) in order to obtain "rest in the coming kingdom and eternal life" (2 Clem 5:5). They have to "keep (their) flesh pure"[180] in view of the coming judgment (cf. 2 Clem 9:1), since the alternative is clearly set between being "righteous" (2 Clem 11:1) and "wretched" (2 Clem 11:1; cf. 2 Petr 2:10). Believers have to "keep their baptism holy and unblemished" (2 Clem 6:9); they have to repent (2 Clem 8:2; 13:1; 16:1–17:1) and "wait for" the kingdom of God" (2 Clem 12:1). The author repeatedly stresses the soteriological implications of the appropriate conduct (ἵνα σωθῶμεν, cf. 2 Clem 14:1). Thus, by means of Christian conduct, believers are exhorted to confirm their calling. The salvation initially granted to them (and more vividly described in 2 Clement than in 2 Peter) is an initial gracious gift of the divine savior, but "salvation requires the preservation of the patronage relationship between Christ (or God) and his earthly clients."[181] Final salvation is only offered "to those who accept the terms of his patronage."[182] In the end, the Lord will "come and redeem" the faithful, "each one according to his works" (2 Clem 17:4), whereas, in cases of bad conduct and disobedience, the first salvation is worthless and will not lead to final salvation (cf. 2 Clem 7:4, etc.).

The thought pattern utilized here strongly corresponds to the ideas hinted at more briefly in 2 Peter. It also shows that the soteriological thought structure

180 Thus Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 450, with reference to 2 Clem 8:4 and 8:6.

181 Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 455.

182 Kelhoffer, "Reciprocity as Salvation," 455.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of 2 Peter is not the result of its focus on Christ's glory nor of its silence about the cross.[183] Even if the Christ event, including his suffering and death, is more extensively reflected (as, e.g., in 2 Clem 1:2, 4), and the focus is not exclusively on the glory of Christ, the exhortation aims at the addressees' proper response. The plausibility that the exhortation was drawn from reciprocity—as was customary in beneficial relations in the surrounding world—is quite strong. In the thought pattern of the patronage systems, a 'mere' gift without any implied duties was nearly inconceivable. Even if a material 'repayment' to the benefactor was impossible, a client was obliged to express signs of loyalty, praise, or appropriate acts. This is transferred to the relationship between Christ and his elect; even if the character of faith as a gracious gift is not denied, the focus is on the implied response. The addressees should keep mindful and not forget what their God has done for them.

3.4 *The Claim of Canonical Harmony or 'Taking over Paul'?*

Seen from this perspective, it becomes obvious that 2 Peter (like 2 Clement) draws on thought patterns from Greco-Roman society. The adoption of those patterns shapes its theological thought. The distance to Paul and his situation cannot be overlooked. Thus, we have to return to the striking reference to Paul in the conclusion of 2 Peter, which presents an image of harmony between the two apostles. Why does the author claim such harmony, where there may have been strong contradictions? And why does he mention Paul, if his own thought is not only uninfluenced by Paul but even phrased in critical distance towards him?

After the eschatological argument in chap. 3, the author adds a final exhortation to his readers. On the basis of the expectation of the conflagration and the Last Judgment, they are now exhorted to keep themselves blameless unto the end (2 Pet 3:14) and to consider the patience of the Lord as σωτηρία (2 Pet 3:15a). The alleged 'delay' of the parousia should not be considered a delay (2 Petr 3:8), nor even a sign of unreliability, but an expression of God's positive, salvific intentions (for the addressees and perhaps others who might still have the chance to repent). To this phrase, which may appear marginal and certainly not the 'climax' of the author's ideas, the note referring to Paul is added (2 Pet 3:15b–16):

183 Käsemann's theological criticism referring to the contrast between a 'theology of the cross' and a 'theology of glory,' appears inappropriate. For the author of 2 Peter, the reference to Christ's divine glory was already suggested from the 'Petrine' views as presented in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and it was particularly useful for the defense of Christ's eschatological power, but it is not the primary reason for 2 Peter's soteriological thought structure.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> Just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

3.4.1 Why Does the Author Refer to Paul at All?

Why does the author add such a comment here at the end of his letter? Why does he refer to Paul at all, given that his theology and his whole letter evince virtually no traces of influence by Paul? In general, he never refers to other biblical texts or passages, apart from "the prophetic word" (2 Pet 1:19) and 'his' first letter (2 Pet 3:1). Even when he quotes a Scriptural passage, as in 2 Pet 3:9, he does not identify the quotation. It seems implausible, therefore, to argue that the author is in need of a supporting authority for his view that God's patience aims at salvation,[184] especially since there is no clear Pauline saying to confirm this.[185] It is more plausible, therefore, to read the hint to Paul not as a confirmation of one particular argument (about the patience of the Lord), but of the author's views in general. The claim is simply that Paul shares the views of "Peter" (viz. the present author) as expressed in this epistle. But this claim cannot be confirmed.

A few aspects have to be considered. First, the author says that Paul wrote "to you." This suggests some relation between the addressees and the Pauline Epistles, at least that (some) of the Pauline Epistles were known to the addressees. Second, when mentioning "all his letters," the author already presupposes a collection and encourages the suggestion that all his letters, perhaps the whole collection, confirm the truth now exposed by "Peter" in the present writing. The question is, however, whether "Peter" seeks the confirmation from Paul's letters or whether "Peter" (i.e., the pseudonymous author) aims at 'authorizing' the Pauline collection, albeit in the interpretation given here. If this is true, it is not Paul confirming Peter's view, but it is "Peter" who claims to have the interpretive key for appropriately reading Paul.

This is confirmed by further observations. It is striking that Paul is introduced quite positively as "our beloved brother," thus suggesting personal knowledge and spiritual respect. Here we have the image of two equal apostles in 'canonical' harmony (cf. 1 Clem 5:3–7; Ign. Rom. 4:3), whereas the memory

184 Contra Anton Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*, EKK 22 (Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994), 265, who thinks that Paul confirms the supposed delay of the parousia as the "weakest point of his [J.F.: Peter's] argument."

185 Even Rom 2:4 does not really fit.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of the tensions between Peter and Paul (cf. Gal 2:11–16) has largely faded. Also the mention of "the wisdom given to him" sounds quite positive,[186] although the next passage, which mentions that some aspects of his letters are δυσνόητα, i.e., hard to understand and therefore easily subject to misunderstanding, may cast a shadow on Paul's wisdom. At the very least this implies that Paul's letters need a correct interpretation in order to avoid distortion by the "untaught and unstable."

The problem, therefore, is a problem of interpretation. There are people who distort the Pauline Epistles and the other writings "to their own destruction." This hints that the misinterpretation has an ethical dimension, causing a sinful life that leads to eschatological damnation (ἀπώλεια). So we can assume that the debate about ethics and soteriology was—at least in part—a debate about the interpretation of the Pauline (or post-Pauline) letters.

But the criticism merely targets those false interpreters rather than Paul himself, possibly since his epistles were already an unquestionable authority that could not be easily criticized in the respective communities, not even by "Peter." Moreover, the idea of apostolic harmony does not allow Peter and Paul to be contrasted. Paul is a "beloved brother" who wrote in the wisdom given by God. Only untaught, unstable, false teachers distort those letters, with the result of an erroneous teaching and a sinful life. Against such teachers, the author claims to provide the correct interpretation: the "Petrine" faith takes over the Pauline Epistles.

3.4.2 Second Peter and the Canon

Of course, this is neither the beginning of 'ecclesiastical hermeneutics'[187] nor the foundation of a 'Petrine ministry' of interpretation and unity. Second Peter is not a decisive step towards a closure of the biblical canon.[188] On the contrary, no other writing was so consistently disputed, and it took two or three generations until the memory of the spurious origin of this 'second letter' of Peter had faded and the writing could be accepted as a (still disputed) authority.

There is also no indication that the author had a particular ecclesiastical ministry or authority in the church. He was probably a teacher, as were his opponents. He is merely wearing the literary mantle of Peter due to the situation

186 Cf. Frey, *Brief*, 358–59 (= *Letter*, 423–24), and more extensively Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 174–80.

187 Thus Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 328–29.

188 Contra David Trobisch, *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*, NTOA 31 (Freiburg, CH; Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/ Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

evoked by the criticism of naïve expectations linked with "Peter" and his martyrdom. He is reacting to a crisis he perceives in the communities of his time. In spite of his earnest intentions, his epistle was given its place much later within the developing collection of authoritative writings. His 'harmonization' of Paul and Peter could not so easily decide their ultimate canonical harmony.

With regard to 2 Pet 3:15–16, the question of whether Paul simply says the same things as "Peter" remains open. For a 'canonical' reading, 2 Peter 3:15–16 may invite a (critical) comparison with Pauline texts, and so the debate on their interpretation is not finished by a 'Petro locuto, causa finita,'[189] but reopened. Such a canonical reading would, then, aim not at a pure harmony but at an internal variety and dispute. Only in this respect can 2 Peter provide a perspective on the New Testament canon in which Paul and Peter, the Pauline Corpus and Catholic Epistles, Letters and Gospel Traditions are put together; ironically, however, this perspective is provided in a writing which was disputed for a very long period and which is in itself strongly dependent on an image of Peter that has not made it into the Christian canon.

4 Concluding Perspectives

a) The 'New Perspective' on 2 Peter as presented in this essay may be uncomfortable for interpreters with a strong interest in a clearly demarcated biblical canon. The idea that a canonical text is influenced by and reacts to a non-canonical text is uncommon and may threaten certain theological convictions. The late dating implied in this reconstruction, somewhere in the middle of the second century,[190] further stretches the canonical borders, bringing 2 Peter closer to the writings of the 'Apostolic Fathers,' such as 2 Clement, whereas other texts that were not included in the New Testament were certainly composed earlier. Historically, the margins of the canon are far from clear-cut. Such a perspective may appear frightening for some readers, while others may consider it a liberation from traditional views. The new perspective presented here was not developed with an eye on either outcome. The only reason for its presentation is that it can provide a more appropriate contextualization of

189 In altering the phrase 'Roma locuta, causa finita,' I consider the fact that 2 Peter most probably was not written in Rome (thus, e.g., Bauckham, *Jude. 2 Peter*, 149–51), but rather in the East, possibly in Alexandria (cf. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*; Frey, *Brief*, 189 = *Letter*, 224).

190 Cf. the argument in Frey, *Brief*, 186–87 (= *Letter*, 220–21).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Peter and thus better explain a number of its challenging or (within the New Testament) 'unique' aspects.

b) The view that 2 Peter is dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter* is particularly illuminating with regard to the unique type of eschatology in 2 Peter: Not only the image of the conflagration as such, but also its non-Christological character in 2 Peter 3:5–13, the function of the conflagration as a mere preparation for the judgment of all humanities' works, and also the idea of the triumphal entry into Christ's Kingdom can best be explained with reference to the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Furthermore, consideration of the *Apocalypse of Peter* can more precisely explain the wording of the scoffers' quote in 2 Pet 3:4 and thus the reason for the composition of the present letter, with its bold type of pseudonymity and the form of a literary testament of Peter. In some respects, 2 Peter becomes less unique and less puzzling when it is reconsidered against this backdrop. It is striking how much the author of 2 Peter actually adopts from the *Apocalypse of Peter*, if it is true that this work and its rather naïve expectation of the end were a 'stumbling stone' for some contemporary teachers that led to an increase of skepticism about the eschatological expectation.

c) If the scope is expanded to include the variety of 'Petrine' writings or 'Petrine' images developed especially in the second and third centuries, 2 Peter becomes part of a 'Petrine discourse' in which the figure of Peter could appear particularly useful for negotiating various aspects of Christian faith. Those different Petrine images—from the Kerygma of Peter to the Pseudo-Clementines—cannot be considered part of a 'school' with particular historical or social connections. It seems, rather, that Peter was so useful as a fictive author and spokesman of various ideas, because there was very little in the early tradition that could be clearly attributed to him. Peter had authority, but there was no clearly defined theological profile of his figure. In contrast, Paul's authority could more easily be disputed, but his letters (and the image of Acts) formed a considerably clearer basis for a 'Pauline discourse.'

If 2 Peter draws on an earlier 'Petrine discourse,' we can more easily understand why the author has not adapted his 'second' letter (2 Pet 3:1) to the 'first' one written in the name of Peter. In view of the variety of Petrine images and the writings attributed to Peter, which represent various genres, such an adaptation was apparently unnecessary. While the author seems to be indebted to the *Apocalypse of Peter* with respect to the focus on Jesus's glory and a number of details of the eschatological expectation, he might have been closer to other traditions or milieus, including the Kerygma of Peter. Here, Peter appears as a spokesman of a Gentile Christian message, with some affinities to

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Greco-Roman (Stoic and Platonic) thought and a strong focus on knowledge and interpretation.

d) Such a contextualization can also explain the fact that the author is a capable language user, with a level of style almost unique in the New Testament. Its author adopts a number of terms unattested in the LXX from a wider range of Hellenistic Jewish and even pagan literature. Moreover, he interacts with contemporary cosmological discourses, combining philosophical ideas and mythological imagery with biblical and early Christian traditions in a creative manner. Rather than being a dogmatic defender of the faith, the author appears as a skillful writer capable of entering into dialogue with the non-Christian world. Furthermore, the author also adopts thought-patterns from his addressees' social world in order to improve the plausibility of his ethical exhortation. All these elements point to a milieu of education that differs from what we know about the Christian movement in the first century.

In such an educated milieu we should even consider the possibility that (some of) the addressees were familiar with the literary technique of *prosopopoiia*, and that the author could expect that his letter was read in this context as a skillful literary text, successively 'playing' with the literary image(s) of Peter. The slow reception of the text, however, indicates that the writing was also received with hesitation and skepticism, and the doubts about its origins disappeared quite late.

e) In this perspective, the letter is neither a poor apologia of an early Christian type of eschatology nor a backdrop into pagan thought, but is an example of a rather educated theology, able to interact with current philosophical and ethical discourses, but in critical distance from the lines of Pauline thought. Of course, the theological problems of the letter cannot be ignored: The harsh polemics cursing the opponents and comparing them to pigs and dogs can be considered "un-Christian in spirit."[191] Its soteriology strongly differs from the Pauline view and is paralleled by some writings of the second century, such as 2 Clement, so that its theological reasoning can better be explained from those writings and the situation of the communities in later times.

It is possible to point to some shortcomings of 2 Peter's theology, and especially to reject the bold claim that this "Peter" can provide the interpretive key to Paul. Nevertheless, through its inclusion in the canon, the epistle provides a marked critical counterpart to the Pauline tradition and stimulating insights into debates on eschatology and ethics in the second century.

191 Thus Abbott, "The Second Epistle of St. Peter," 447.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bibliography

Abbott, Edwin A. "Appendix V: The Second Epistle of St. Peter Contrasted with the Gospel of John." In *From Letter to Spirit: An Attempt to Reach through Varying Voices the Abiding Word*, 443–67. London: Black, 1903.

Adams, Edward. *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven: Cosmic Catastrophe and the World's End in the New Testament and Its World*. LNTS 347. London: Continuum, 2007.

Adams, Edward. "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4." *NTS* 51 (2005): 106–22.

Allison, Dale C., Jr. *James*. ICC. London; New York: Bloomsbury; T&T Clark, 2013.

Aune, David E. "Eschatology [Early Christian]." *ABD*, 2:594–609.

Avemarie, Friedrich. "Die Werke des Gesetzes im Spiegel des Jakobusbriefs. A Very Old Perspective on Paul." *ZTK* 98 (2001): 282–309.

Barnes, Timothy D. "'Another Shall Gird Thee': Probative Evidence for the Death of Peter." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, edited by Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado, 76–98. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3713–52.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "Eldad and Modad." In *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, edited by Richard J. Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov, 1:244–56. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2013.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature." *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95.

Blumenthal, Christian. *"Es wird aber kommen der Tag des Herrn": eine textkritische Studie zu 2Petr 3,10*. BBB 154. Hamburg: Philo, 2007.

Blumenthal, Christian. *Prophetie und Gericht: der Judasbrief als Zeugnis urchristlicher Prophetie*. BBB 156. Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, edited by Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, and Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bremmer, Jan N. "The Domestication of Early Christian Prophecy and the Ascension of Isaiah." In *The Ascension of Isaiah*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer, Thomas R. Karmann, and Tobias Nicklas, 1–22. Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha 11. Leuven: Peeters, 2016.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Burchard, Christoph. *Der Jakobusbrief*. HNT 15/1. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.

Callan, Terrance. *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014.

Cambe, Michel. *Kerygma Petri: textus et commentarius*. CChrSA 15. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

Charles, J. Daryl. *Virtue amidst Vice: The Catalog of Virtues in 2 Peter 1*. JSNTSup 150. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Collins, John J. *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*. SBLDS 13. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1974.

Danker, Frederick W. "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree." *CBQ* 40 (1978): 64–82.

Danker, Frederick W. "II Peter 3:10 and Psalm of Solomon 17:10." *ZNW* 53 (1962): 82–86.

Davids, Peter H. *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. PNTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006.

Dschulnigg, P. "Der theologische Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes." *BZ* 33 (1989): 166–71.

Elliott, John H. "Peter, Silvanus and Mark in 1 Peter and Sociological-Exegetical Perspectives on a Petrine Group in Rome." In *Wort in der Zeit neutestamentliche Studien: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag*, edited by Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann, 250–67. Leiden: Brill, 1980.

Ellis, E. Earle. *The Making of the New Testament Documents*. BIS 39. Leiden: Brill, 1999.

Erlemann, Kurt. *Naherwartung und Parusieverzögerung im Neuen Testament: ein Beitrag zur Frage religiöser Zeiterfahrung*. TANZ 17. Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1995.

Fischel, Henry A. "The Use of the Sorites (*Climax, Gradatio*) in the Tannaitic Period." *HUCA* 44 (1973): 119–51.

Frey, Jörg. "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, edited by Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Clare K. Rothschild, and Michaela Engelmann, 683–732. WUNT 246. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Frey, Jörg. "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter." In *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, edited by Ruben Zimmermann, Jan G. van der Watt, and Susanne Luther, 275–310. WUNT 2/296. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Frey, Jörg. "Eschatology in the New Testament—an Introduction: Classical Issues, Disputed Themes, and Current Perspectives." In *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, edited by Jan G. van der Watt, 3–32. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Frey, Jörg. "Fire and Water? Apocalyptic Imagination and Hellenistic Worldview in 2 Peter." In *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, edited by Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, 451–71. JSJSup 175. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016.

Frey, Jörg. "Hermeneutical Problems Posed by 2 Peter." In *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, edited by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, 9–36. WUNT 397. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Frey, Jörg. "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ." In *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, edited by Jan G. van der Watt, 493–513. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Frey, Jörg. "The Epistle of Jude between Judaism and Hellenism." In *Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition: A New Perspective on James to Jude*, edited by Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall, 309–30. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Frey, Jörg. *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*. Translated by Kathleen Ess. Waco, Tex.: Baylor UP, 2018.

Frey, Jörg. "The Use of Δόξα in Paul and John as Shaped by the Septuagint." In *The Reception of Septuagint Words in Jewish-Hellenistic and Christian Literature*, edited by Eberhard Bons, Ralph Brucker, and Jan Joosten, 85–104. WUNT 2/367. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

Frey, Jörg. "Was erwartet die Johannesapokalypse? Zur Eschatologie des letzten Buchs der Bibel." In *Die Johannesapokalypse: Kontexte—Konzepte—Rezeption*, edited by Jörg Frey, James A. Kelhoffer, and Franz Tóth, 473–551. WUNT 287. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Grässer, Erich. *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte*. 2nd ed. BZNW 22. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 1960.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. "Kontinuität und Innovation: Πίστις im Ersten Clemensbrief und den Ignatianen." In *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt*, edited by Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, 667–82. WUNT 373. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. "Petrus, das Feuer und die Interpretation der Schrift: Beobachtungen zum Weltenbrandmotiv im zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

biblischen Monotheismus, edited by Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, 183–208. BThS 137. Neukirchen; Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2013.

Hahn, Ferdinand. "Das Problem des Frühkatholizismus." In *Exegetische Beiträge zum ökumenischen Gespräch. Gesammelte Aufsätze Bd. 1*, 57–75. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1986.

Hahn, Ferdinand. "Frühkatholizismus als ökumenisches Problem." In *Exegetische Beiträge zum ökumenischen Gespräch. Gesammelte Aufsätze Bd. 1*, 39–56. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1986.

Hoppe, R. "Parusieglaube zwischen dem ersten Thessalonicherbrief und dem zweiten Petrusbrief: Ein unerledigtes Problem." In *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*, edited by Jacques Schlosser, 433–49. BETL 176. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

Horst, Pieter W. van der. "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity." In *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction*, 227–51. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994.

Jakab, Attila. "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 174–86. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Joubert, Stephan. *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection*. WUNT 2/124. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.

Käsemann, Ernst. "An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology." In *Essays on New Testament Themes*, Trans. W.M. Montague, 169–95. London: SCM, 1964.

Kelhoffer, James A. "Faith and Righteousness in Second Clement: Probing the Purported Influence of 'Late Judaism' and the Beginnings of 'Early Catholicism.'" In *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt*, edited by Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, 683–720. WUNT 373. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Kelhoffer, James A. "Reciprocity as Salvation: Christ as Salvific Patron and the Corresponding 'Payback' Expected of Christ's Earthly Clients According to the Second Letter of Clement." *NTS* 59 (2013): 433–56.

Koester, Helmut. "Φύσις." *TDNT*, 9:246–71.

Konradt, Matthias. "Der Jakobusbrief im frühchristlichen Kontext." In *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*, edited by Jacques Schlosser, 171–212. BETL 176. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Acherousia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext." *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe." *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Kraus, Thomas J. "Fürbitte für die Toten im frühen Christentum: 'Ich werde … den gewähren, den sie aus der Strafe erbitten.'" In *Das Gebet im Neuen Testament*, edited by Hans Klein, Vasile Mihoc, Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, and Christos Karakolis, 355–96. WUNT 249. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Kraus, Thomas J. "P.Vindob.G 39756 + Bodl. MS Gr. th. f. 4 [P]: Fragmente eines Codex der griechischen Petrus-Apokalypse." *BSAP* 40 (2003): 45–61.

Kraus, Thomas J. *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/136. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Merkt, Andreas. *1. Petrus*. NTP 21/1. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015.

Miller, Robert J. "Is There Independent Attestation for the Transfiguration in 2 Peter?" *NTS* 42 (1996): 620–25.

Minnen, Peter van. "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 15–39. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Morgan, Teresa. *Roman Faith and Christian Faith:* Pistis *and* Fides *in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Müller, Peter. "Der Judasbrief." *TR* 63 (1988): 267–89.

Mutschler, Bernhard. *Glaube in den Pastoralbriefen: Pistis als Mitte christlicher Existenz*. WUNT 256. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Najman, Hindy. *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*. JSJSup 77. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Neyrey, Jerome H. *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37C. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times." In *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, edited by Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, 183–200. LNTS 522. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, edited by Walter Ameling, 35–48. Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011.

Nicklas, Tobias. "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria." In *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, edited by Luca Arcari, 27–46. STAC 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Nicklas, Tobias. "Spuren der Offenbarung des Petrus in der Alten Kirche." In *Studien zur Offenbarung des Petrus: Historische Einordnung, Überlieferung, Theologie*, edited by Tobias Nicklas and Thomas J. Kraus. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming.

Niebuhr, Karl-Wilhelm. "'A New Perspective on James?' Neue Forschungen zum Jakobusbrief." *TLZ* 129 (2004): 1019–44.

Parker, D.C. *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Paulsen, Henning. "Das Kerygma Petri und die urchristliche Apologetik." *ZKG* 88 (1977): 1–37.

Paulsen, Henning. *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*. KEK 12/2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992.

Ruf, Martin G. *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*. WUNT 2/300. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Schelkle, K.H. *Die Petrusbriefe, Der Judasbrief*. HTK 13/2. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1961.

Schmidt, Karl Matthias. *Mahnung und Erinnerung im Maskenspiel: Epistolographie, Rhetorik und Narrativik der pseudepigraphen Petrusbriefe*. HBS 38. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003.

Schrage, Wolfgang. "Der zweite Petrusbrief." In *Die "Katholischen" Briefe: die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes und Judas*, edited by Horst Robert Balz and Wolfgang Schrage, 122–55. NTD 10. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973.

Schrage, Wolfgang. "Ein Tag ist vor dem Herrn wie tausend Jahre, und tausend Jahre sind wie ein Tag." In *Glaube und Eschatologie: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag*, edited by Erich Gräßer and Otto Merk, 267–76. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985.

Schreiner, Thomas R. *1, 2 Peter, Jude*. NAC 37. Nashville, Tenn.: B&H, 2003.

Schumacher, Thomas. *Zur Entstehung christlicher Sprache: eine Untersuchung der paulinischen Idiomatik und der Verwendung des Begriffes πίστις*. BBB 168. Göttingen; Bonn: V&R Unipress; Bonn University Press, 2012.

Sellin, Gerhard. "Die Häretiker des Judasbriefes." *ZNW* 77 (1986): 206–25.

Soards, M.L. "1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School." *ANRW* 2.25.5 (1988): 3827–49.

Spicq, Ceslas. *Notes de lexicographie néotestamentaire, Supplément*. OBO 22/3. Fribourg; Göttingen: Éditions Universitaires; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982.

Starr, James M. *Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in Its Hellenistic Context*. CBNT 33. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000.

Stephens, Mark B. *Annihilation or Renewal? The Meaning and Function of New Creation in the Book of Revelation*. WUNT 2/307. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Strecker, Christian. "Fides—Pistis—Glaube: Kontexte und Konturen einer Theologie der „Annahme" bei Paulus." In *Lutherische und neue Pauluserspektive Beiträge*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

zu einem Schlüsselproblem der gegenwärtigen exegetischen Diskussion, edited by Michael Bachmann, 223–50. WUNT 182. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.

Stuhlmacher, Peter. *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Vol. 2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.

Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 63–77. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Trobisch, David. *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*. NTOA 31. Freiburg, CH; Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996.

Tuckett, Christopher M. *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. OAF. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Ueberschaer, Nadine. *Theologie des Lebens: Glaube und Leben bei Paulus und Johannes—ein theologisch-konzeptioneller Vergleich*. WUNT 389. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Usener, Knut. "Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur." In *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, edited by Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, 149–81. BTS 137. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013.

Vögtle, Anton. *Das Neue Testament und die neuere katholische Exegese*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1966.

Vögtle, Anton. *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*. EKK 22. Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994.

Watson, Duane F. *Invention, Arrangement, and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter*. SBLDS 104. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.

Windisch, Hans. *Die katholischen Briefe*. Edited by Herbert Preisker. 3rd ed. HNT 15. Tübingen: Mohr, 1951.

Zmijewski, J. "Apostolische Paradosis und Pseudepigraphie im Neuen Testament: 'Durch Erinnerung wachhalten' (2. Petr. 1,13; 3,1)." *BZ* 23 (1979): 161–71.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 3

The *Apocalypse of Peter* as the First Christian Martyr Text: Its Date, Provenance and Relationship with 2 Peter

Jan N. Bremmer

Jörg Frey's Radboud Prestige Lectures have convincingly demonstrated that 2 Peter reacts to the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[1] His argument once again raises the question of the date and place of composition of this intriguing apocalypse, as it may help us to determine with more certainty the date and place of composition of 2 Peter. Unfortunately, these questions are not that easy to answer, as recent discussions may illustrate. Regarding the place of composition of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, I have wavered between Palestine and Egypt.[2] On the other hand, regarding the time of composition Tobias Nicklas has been wavering too, recently locating the *Apocalypse* in the time after the great Jewish revolt in Egypt in 115–117, but in his contribution to this book showing himself less convinced of his own thesis.[3] From these two problems, date and location, I have mainly concentrated my most recent discussion on the place of composition and stated regarding the time of composition: 'At present, there is a general consensus that it must date from the last decades of the first half of the second century AD, given its mention by Clement of Alexandria.'[4] Yet there is more

1 Frey elaborates here a thesis first argued by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

2 Compare my "The Apocalypse of Peter: Greek or Jewish?," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 1–14, updated in my *Maidens, Magic, and Martyrs in Early Christianity: Collected Essays I* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 269–80, with my "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 308–9, updated in *Maidens, Magic, and Martyrs*, 313–28.

3 Compare Tobias Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, ed. Luca Arcari, STAC 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 40 with his contribution to the present volume.

4 Clem. Alex. *apud* Eus. *HE* 6.14.1, cf. J.L. Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 132; Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 268–81.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_004
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

to say on both aspects, and I will therefore look once again at these problems in this essay. Unfortunately, there is no 'smoking gun' to determine a definitive solution, but I will evaluate various old arguments and offer a few new ones. Specifically, in what follows I will look at the theme of martyrdom in the *Apocalypse* (§ 1); its date and provenance (§ 2) and end with some conclusions regarding the date and provenance of our *Apocalypse* and 2 Peter (§ 3).

1 Martyrdom in the *Apocalypse of Peter*

Anyone interested in the history of ancient martyrdom will look in vain for attention to the *Apocalypse of Peter* in current surveys of early Christian martyrological literature. The *Apocalypse* is absent from the recent provocative studies by Candida Moss, from the concise survey of martyrdom in RAC by Jan Willem van Henten and from the informed but debatable introduction to the recent new edition of many early Christian Acta martyrum by Hans Rudolph Seeliger and Wolfgang Wischmeyer.[5] Clearly, scholarly conventions have framed the conversations around the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the Acta martyrum as two separate conversations. This is a great example of how sometimes genre and category forestall our progress, as there are a number of references to martyrdom in our text. On the other hand, its survival especially in Ethiopic has made the *Apocalypse* perhaps less accessible to most students of early Christianity. Moreover, the earliest students of the text, Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930) and Eduard Norden (1868–1941), were especially interested in the depiction of hell in the *Apocalypse* as that was the most striking part of the newly found Greek text, which also was the easiest to compare to classical pagan literature.[6] Subsequent studies have focused in particular on the relation between the Greek and Ethiopic text, between the text and the

5 Candida R. Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Candida R. Moss, *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013); J.W. van Henten, "Martyrium II," *RAC* 22 (2011): 316–21; Hans Reinhard Seeliger and Wolfgang Wischmeyer, eds., *Märtyrerliteratur*, TU 172 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2015), 1–45.

6 Adolf von Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*, TU 9.2 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893); Eduard Norden, "Die Petrusapokalypse und ihre antiken Vorbilder," in *Kleine Schriften zum klassischen Altertum*, Reprint 1966 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1893), 218–33. For the early reception, see also my "The Apocalypse of Peter: Greek or Jewish?"; J.-M. Roessli, "Loisy et les Apocryphes Pétriniens découverts à Akhmîm-Panopolis," in *Gnose et manichéisme: entre les oasis d'Égypte et la Route de la Soie : hommage à Jean-Daniel Dubois*, ed. Anna Van den Kerchove and Luciana Grabriela Soares Santoprete, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Sciences Religieuses 176 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 782–86.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Oracula Sibyllina, the text and 2 Peter, the date and the place of composition, and the identification of the Liar. Honoris causa, I mention Richard Bauckham, Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Thomas J. Kraus, Jane Lightfoot, Tobias Nicklas, Enrico Norelli and Eibert Tigchelaar.[7]

Yet although neglected by modern scholars, the theme of persecution and martyrdom is not unimportant in the *Apocalypse* and deserves a more detailed discussion in relation to the other early testimonies of Christian martyrdom, such as the Martyrdom of Polycarp and the famous Letter of Lyons and Vienne. Let us start at Chapter 2E, where we find our theme for the first time. In the explanation of the parable of the fig tree, Jesus tells Peter that the Liar will kill many followers of Christ and 'there shall be many martyrs' (2.10E).[8] This statement is repeated in the next verse, which states that 'there shall be martyrs by his hand: many will die and become martyrs' (2.11E). The section is concluded by the reassurance that 'those that will die by his hand shall become "martyrs" and be counted among the good and righteous martyrs who have made themselves agreeable to the Lord during their life' (2.13E).

What is of great interest in this part of Chapter 2 is the statement in verse 13 that those who have died will become 'martyrs'. In other words, in this verse

7 Enrico Norelli, "Situation des Apocryphes Pétriniens," *Apocrypha* 2 (1991): 31–62 and Enrico Norelli, "L'adversaire eschatologique dans l'Apocalypse de Pierre," in *Les forces du bien et du mal dans les premiers siècles de l'église*, ed. Yves-Marie Blanchard, Bernard Pouderon, and Maddalena Scopello, Théologie historique 118 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2011), 291–317; Richard J. Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Thomas J. Kraus, "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe," *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98; Thomas J. Kraus, "P.Vindob.G 39756 + Bodl. MS Gr. th. f. 4 [P]: Fragmente eines Codex der griechischen Petrus-Apokalypse," *BSAP* 40 (2003): 45–61; Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 63–77; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, passim; Tobias Nicklas, "'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, ed. Walter Ameling, Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011), 35–48; Tobias Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times," in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, ed. Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, LNTS 522 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015), 183–200; Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*.

8 I use the translation of C.D.G. Müller, "The Apocalypse of Peter," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, Tr. R.McL. Wilson, vol. 2 (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992), 620–38, sometimes adapted in the light of Richard J. Bauckham and Paolo Marrassini, "Apocalypse de Pierre," in *Ecrits apocryphes chrétiens*, ed. François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, vol. 1, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 442 (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 747–74.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

'martyrs' is a kind of title, and the repetition and explanation of the term suggests that the author is here employing a relatively new term. Now the Ethiopic term, as Alessandro Bausi, (per email 28-4-2016) informs me, 'is actually samā't (in the accusative: samā't-a, no alternative reading in the second known MS) which is definitely used to translate Greek martys/martyres, in the whole range of its meanings.' Unfortunately, though, the Ethiopic translation is itself a translation from the Arabic,[9] but, as Bausi further notes, 'There is more than a chance (viz. that the Arabic model had martys/martyres in front him), since this is how both Arabic šahīd (martyr, witness) and šāhid (witness) can be translated, both in turn capable of rendering the Greek term and to be translated into Eth. with samā't.' I conclude that it is reasonable to suppose that the title martys for those that had died for Christ was attested in the original Greek text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and should be taken into account when discussing its first occurrence.

We will have to come back to these verses, but we will first continue our investigation. In the enumeration of the various punishments in the so-called Akhmim fragment, the Greek text also mentions men and women punished by scourging and the consuming of their entrails by worms: οὗτοι δὲ ἦσαν οἱ διώξαντες τοὺς δικαίους καὶ παραδόντες αὐτούς (27A), 'These were those who persecuted the righteous and handed them over,' and these words closely correspond to the Ethiopic 'These are the persecutors and betrayers of my righteous ones' (9.2E). Eibert Tigchelaar has argued that the verses 9.2–3E/27A are a later interpolation in an already existing catalogue of sins.[10] His suggestion is very persuasive, as indeed the enumeration of sins has nothing Christian about it and may well have been adapted from an earlier tour of hell. Such an adaptation fits the patchwork character of our text, but the interpolation certainly belonged to the original Greek text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, because the author of the Second Sibylline Oracle, who extensively made use of the *Apocalypse of Peter* (see § 2), knew these verses. He mentions as those that will be destroyed forever: βλάσφημοι δ' ἐγένοντο καὶ εὐσεβέων κεραϊσταί πιστολέται καὶ τῶν δικαίων φθισήνορες ἀνδρῶν, 'they were blasphemers, persecutors of the pious ones, who broke faith and who hounded righteous men' (261–62, tr. Lightfoot, adapted), verses that are clearly based on those of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

9 See most recently Paolo Marrassini, "Scoperta e riscoperte dell'Apocalisse di Pietro fra Greco, Arabo ed Etiopico," in *I papiri letterari Cristiani*, ed. Guido Bastianini and Angelo Casanova (Firenze: Istituto papirologico "G. Vitelli," 2011), 147–60; Alessandro Bausi, "Towards a Re-Edition of the Ethiopic Dossier of the *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Few Remarks on the Ethiopic Manuscript Witnesses," *Apocrypha* 27 (2016): 179–96.

10 Tigchelaar, 'Is the Liar Bar Kokhba?', 71f.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The paraphrase of the Oracula Sibyllina clarifies the meaning of the Greek and Ethiopic versions. The *Apocalypse*, as Nicklas has seen,[11] evidently has in mind those who have abandoned the Christian faith during the persecutions. Somewhat surprisingly, perhaps, studies of early Christian apostasy are relatively few and have to work with very little detail.[12] Yet the phenomenon as such must belong to the earliest times of Christianity as Paul already exhorts his readers to stand firm in the Lord (1 Thess. 3.8). Surely, apostasy will always have been part of persecutions, as we can see from Pliny's account to Trajan in his famous letter about the Christians, but also from the reactions in Smyrna during the persecution of Decius.[13]

The verses are also an interesting testimony to a feature of the prosecutions that must have been widespread, as the text continues by mentioning those punished by chewing their tongues or biting their lips because they 'blasphemed the way of righteousness and slandered it' (οὗτοι δὲ ἦσαν οἱ βλασφημήσαντες καὶ κακῶς εἰπόντες τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης: 28A). The Ethiopic has '<they are those> who caused the death, the false witnesses' (9.4E). In other words, the 'blaspheming' in this case is not so much taking the name of the Lord in vain, as Tigchelaar suggests, but rather the slandering of the Christians, as Lightfoot argues.[14] Apparently, the author of the *Apocalypse* refers to the problem of false accusations by private delatores for financial or otherwise personal gain. Their activity was an abuse of the Roman legal system that was the subject of frequent complaints and that hampered Pliny's processing of the accusations. As he says: 'Now that I have begun to deal with this problem, as so often happens, the charges are becoming more widespread and

11 Nicklas, "'Insider" und "Outsider"', 43.

12 But see John M.G. Barclay, "Deviance and Apostasy: Some Applications of Deviance Theory to First-Century Judaism and Christianity," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London; New York: Routledge, 1995), 114–27; Stephen G. Wilson, *Leaving the Fold: Apostates and Defectors in Antiquity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 66–99; Zebra Crook, "Agents of Apostasy: Apostasy in a Collectivistic Culture," in *Conversion and Initiation in Antiquity: Shifting Identities—Creating Change*, ed. Birgitte Secher Bøgh (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014), 119–34; Larry W. Hurtado, *Why on Earth Did Anyone Become a Christian in the First Three Centuries?* (Milwaukee, Wi.: Marquette UP, 2016), 94–103.

13 Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96; Walter Ameling, "The Christian Lapsi in Smyrna, 250 AD (*Martyrium Pionii* 12–14)," *VC* 62 (2008): 133–60.

14 Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba?," 72–73; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 510, who persuasively compares Matthew 15.19 and Col 3.8.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

increasing in variety' (Mox ipso tractatu, ut fieri solet, diffundente se crimine plures species inciderunt: Ep. 10.96.5).[15]

We observe another feature of the martyrdom complex after the text turns from the damned to the elect, as the former will ask the latter to have mercy upon them (13E). For the continuation of the text we have the so-called Greek Rainer fragment,[16] which relates:

> I will give to my called and my chosen (τοῖς κλητοῖς μου καὶ ἐκλεκτοῖς μου) whomsoever they will ask me for,[17] and I will give them a fine baptism in the salvation of what is called the Acherusian Lake in the Elysian Field, a part of the justice with my holy ones (μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων μου).

The combination of 'called' and 'chosen' is typically Christian and does not occur in pagan Greek literature. This phrase is obviously derived from Jesus' saying in Matthew (22.14): πολλοὶ γάρ εἰσιν κλητοὶ ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί, in itself a variant of a well-known Greek, probably Orphic, dictum 'many are narthêkophoroi, but the bakchoi are few', which was already known to Plato (Phd. 69c = OF 576: ναρθηκοφόροι μὲν πολλοί, βάκχοι δέ τε παῦροι).[18] The combination also occurs in Revelation 17.14 where the Lamb is accompanied by

15 For the *delatores*, see A.W. Lintott, "*Delator* and *Index*: Informers and Accusers at Rome from the Republic to the Early Principate," *Accordia Research Papers* 9 (2001–2003): 105–22; Steven H. Rutledge, *Imperial Inquisitions: Prosecutors and Informants from Tiberius to Domitian* (New York; London: Routledge, 2001); Yann Rivière, *Les délateurs sous l'Empire romain* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2012); Maria Federica Petraccia Lucernoni, *Indices e delatores nell'antica Roma* (Milano: LED Edizioni Universitarie, 2014). But note also the long letter by Mommsen to Harnack on the subject (2–12–1894): Stefan Rebenich, *Theodor Mommsen und Adolf Harnack* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 663–67.

16 For the text, see Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), 126; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 522.

17 Note that the Greek text (ὃν ἐὰν αἰτήσωνταί με) has been emended by James instead of the obscure transmitted θεον εαν στεσωνται. Although this emendation has been generally accepted, we should remain conscious of the fact that this passage has been transmitted somewhat garbled, as is the case in the Ethiopic text, of which Bausi informs me (*per* email 5-5-2016): 'the Ethiopic text is difficult, and again conjectural in one important point, namely "And I will give the portion of the righteous ones" (Buchholz). "I will give" is a conjecture, although a likely one; "the righteous" (*ṣādqān*) is not exactly "saints", but the plural might betray the earlier presence of a plural adjective, like ἅγιοι, whereas the root *ṣādqān* is the same as that used for the noun for "justice" (*ṣədq* = δικαιοσύνης)'.

18 For the precise form of the dictum and its history, see Winfried Bühler, *Zenobii Athoi proverbia V* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 371–72, to be added to the commentary of Bernabé on *OF* 576.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the 'called, chosen and faithful' (οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ κλητοὶ καὶ ἐκλεκτοὶ καὶ πιστοί). However, Revelation is not very influential in this *Apocalypse*, if at all, whereas Matthew clearly is an important intertext with its Transfiguration scene (15E).[19]

Apparently, these verses are the earliest example for the belief that martyrs and confessores could still save sinners from the punishments in hell. After our *Apocalypse*, this belief becomes visible first in the famous Letter of the congregations of Lyons and Vienne where the martyrs prayed for them who had treated them so cruelly (Eus. *HE* 5.2.5), but this intercession must have soon been extended to non-Christian dead, witness Thecla's prayer for Queen Tryphaena's late daughter Falconilla on the Queen's request (APTheclae 29).[20] In the West, prayers for the dead must have equally been established early, as Tertullian and Cyprian abundantly attest the notion;[21] a striking case is Perpetua's prayer for her brother Deinocrates, who had died some years earlier, still unbaptised (Passio Perpetua 7–8). This belief was evidently widespread, as we find it in the Middle East (our *Apocalypse*), Asia Minor (Acts of Paul) and North Africa.[22]

Now Bauckham, followed by Lightfoot, has pointed to the influence of Plato's Phaedo (113e–114b) in that in our *Apocalypse* the sinners are not saved by the intercession of an ideal figure or saint, for example by Paul or Mary, but by those whom the sinners have wronged, that is, by the martyrs.[23] Postulating influence of Plato in this case seems hardly convincing. Originally, the belief in intercession will have started from the words of Stephen when he was stoned: 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them' (Acts 7.59, tr. NRSV). Intercession by those who have been wronged is still the case in our *Apocalypse* and the Letter of Vienne and Lyons, that is, in our earliest examples. Yet, as the early

19 See also Richard J. Bauckham, "The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter," *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87; Meghan Henning, *Educating Early Christians through the Rhetoric of Hell: "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" as Paideia in Matthew and the Early Church*, WUNT 2/382 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 183–89; Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek?," 28f.

20 For a detailed analysis, see Jeffrey A. Trumbower, *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 56–75.

21 Tertullian, *Ad martyras* 1.6, *De pudicitia* 22, *De paenitentia* 9.4, *Scorpiace* 10.8; Cyprian, *Ep.* 15.1.2, 20.1, 21.2.1 and 3.2, 27.1.1; Eusebius, *HE* 5.1.45, 5.2.5, 5.18.6–7, 6.5.6; Ernst Dassmann, *Sündenvergebung durch Taufe, Busse und Martyrerfürbitte in den Zeugnissen frühchristlicher Frömmigkeit und Kunst* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 153–82; Thomas J. Kraus, "Fürbitte für die Toten im frühen Christentum: 'Ich werde … den gewähren, den sie aus der Strafe erbitten,'" in *Das Gebet im Neuen Testament*, ed. Hans Klein et al., WUNT 249 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 355–96.

22 See also Bremmer, *Maidens, Magic and Martyrs*, 161, 375.

23 Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 144; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 527f.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

evidence also shows, the intercession must have soon been extended to others. Consequently, our *Apocalypse* with the saving martyrs is not the odd one out among the earliest sources; later Christian Apocalypses developed into the direction of intercession by ideal figures or saints, perhaps under the influence of the ceasing of the persecutions.

The sinners will receive only 'a part of the righteousness'. Evidently, they do not have the same rights as the martyrs themselves, but they will receive it with 'my saints'. The latter expression is more noteworthy than has been realised until now. Rather early on, the idea must have originated among Greek Christians to call martyrs ἅγιοι, 'saints'. We find this as early as the Acts of Justin (A 1 and 6 Bastiaensen) of about AD 165, in Origen,[24] and during the persecution of Decius in the mention by Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria (Eus. *HE* 6.41.18) of a 'ἁγία virgin' Ammonarion, who was martyred for her faith. In the West we find the usage in Tertullian,[25] and Cyprian is even called sanctus martyr electus a Deo in the Acts of Cyprian (2^1.1 and 2^2.1 Bastiaensen), which were written during the persecution under Valerian in AD 257 and 258. Following Christ and dying for his cause made the martyrs holy as a group. Once again, this specific usage seems to occur first here in the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[26]

Moreover, the martyrs will receive a 'fine christening' in the so-called Acherousian Lake in the Elysian Field. The Lake and the Elysium appear also in 3 Baruch (10:2), where Baruch sees 'an unbroken plain and in the middle of it was a lake' in the third heaven. Presumably, although the precise date and provenance of 3 Baruch remain an enigma, this is a paraphrase of our *Apocalypse*, just like the mention of the Lake and Elysium in the Oracula Sibyllina (2.335–38).[27] The Lake surely derives from Plato's Phaedo, although Lightfoot also wonders about Orphic influence.[28] In any case, these parallels show that the Ethiopic version is a later development, which not only does no longer have the Lake but instead an Acherousian Field in which the Elysium is situated, but also, and more importantly, no longer has the intercession of

24 Franz Faessler, *Der hagios-Begriff bei Origenes: Ein Beitrag zum Hagios-Problem*, Paradosis 13 (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1958), 56–62.

25 Tertullian, *De fuga* 5.3; *Passio Perpetuae* 1.6 en 16.1; Cyprian, *Ep.* 23 and 36.2, 3.

26 For the martyrs as saints, see Jan N. Bremmer, "From Heroes to Saints and from Martyrological to Hagiographical Discourse," in *Sakralität und Heldentum. Zum Relationsgeflecht von Heroischem und Religiösem*, ed. Feliz Heinzer, Jörn Leonhard, and Ralf von den Hoff (Würzburg: Ergon, 2017), 35–66.

27 See my *Maidens, Magic and Martyrs*, 277. Unfortunately, the commentary *ad loc.* of Alexander Kulik, *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2010) is marred by a lack of historical feeling, as he lists all parallels without chronological order.

28 Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 534, comparing *OF* 340.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the martyrs (14.1–2E)[29]—at least, if we follow the translation by Marrassini.[30] Apparently, it did not accept the saving of the sinners but opted for eternal punishment. One may wonder whether our *Apocalypse* has developed a theme from the Apocalypse of Moses (37.3) where Adam is washed in the Acherousian Lake. This is not impossible, as this text probably predates our apocalypse.[31] The step from washing to baptising is not that great. Moreover, the crossing of the Acheron was a prerequisite for entering the underworld in Greek mythology.[32] In our case, the author made the transition into a better world clear by adding the Elysium, although the combination as such is not attested in Greek mythology.

Our last example of martyrdom is in Chapter 14. Here the text directly addresses Peter: 'And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup which I promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that the destruction may have a beginning, and you have been chosen because of the promise I made you' (14.4E).[33] As Alessandro Bausi, informs me (per email 2-5-2016), 'the Ethiopic (both MSS) has no word corresponding to the Greek αὐτοῦ, but there is simply "so that the destruction may have a beginning" (this had been actually correctly noted by Buchholz in his edition). Also note that "may have a beginning" is a conjecture: the Ethiopic is definitely corrupt, lit. "may be sanctified", with an easy exchange between yətqaddas (as transmitted) and yətqadam (as edited). The latter emendation is proposed by Buchholz and is supported by the Greek equivalent ἀρχὴν λάβῃ.'[34]

The reading of the critically reconstructed Ethiopic suggests that the author intended to say that the destruction of the Roman Christian congregation

29 Thus, rightly, Lightfoot, *Sibyline Oracles*, 526–27, but insufficiently taken into account by Nicklas, '"Insider" und "Outsider"'.

30 On the other hand, as Bausi (*per* email 5-5-2016) tells me: 'The Ethiopic could also be rendered something like: "And then I will give my elect and my righteous ones the baptism and the salvation for those which they ask of me, in that part of the field of ʾAkərosyā which is called ʾAnēslasleyā", i.e. in a text where the syntax is so devastated by the manuscript tradition and the intermediate passages, this could be possible.'

31 Cf. Jan Dochhorn, *Die Apokalypse des Mose: Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, TSAJ 106 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 172 (date), 487–93 (Acherousian Lake); see also Thomas J. Kraus, "Acherousia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext," *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

32 This is well argued by Dochhorn, *Apokalypse des Mose*, 489.

33 Note that δεκτός in F 2 of P. Vindob. G. 39756 is a rare word, which our author derived from the New Testament (Luke 4.24; Acts 10.35).

34 Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988), 356.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

would start with the martyrdom of Peter.[35] We need not believe that the author had detailed information about the Neronian persecution. Yet, from a later perspective, it made sense to let that persecution start with its, supposedly, most important Christian victim. Moreover, the destruction does not end there but seems to be extended to a general eschatological destruction as already prophesied in Chapters 4 and 5, which is inspired by the image of the Weltenbrand. In this description of the cosmic conflagration we find the traditional combination of fire and waters. The same combination occurs in 2 Peter, where the mention of Sodom and Gomorrah is immediately preceded by the mention of Noah (2.5). Ultimately, though, the combination of (partial) floods and conflagrations goes back to the Pythagorean Philolaus (44A 18DK),[36] Plato's influential Timaeus (22c), and the Stoics,[37] who all mention the combination of the destructive forces of water and fire.[38]

The phrase 'Drink the Cup' is inspired by the words of Jesus in Gethsemane that the cup of death be taken from him (Matt. 26.39, 42, 44; Mark 14.36, 39; Luke 22.42), but it appears several times as a metaphor for the death of the martyr (as a follower of Christ), beginning with Matthew (20.22–23: to the sons of Zebedee), and subsequently in the Ascension of Isaiah (5.13: the Martyrdom of Isaiah) and the Martyrdom of Polycarp (14.2: Polycarp participates in the 'Cup of Christ'). The expression becomes quite popular in later accounts of martyrdoms.[39]

Moreover, although it is true that the words regarding Peter's martyrdom 'are completely compatible with the hypothesis that the writer knew that Peter

35 Similarly, although working from the Greek text, Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup which I promised you!'".

36 Cf. Walter Burkert, *Lore and science in ancient Pythagoreanism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 315 n. 86.

37 Seneca, *Nat.* 3.27–30, *Cons. Marc.* 26.6; Origen, *C. Cels.* 4.64.

38 Joseph Chaine, "Cosmogonie aquatique et conflagration finale d'après la Secunda Petri," *RB* 46 (1937): 207–16; John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, SBLDS 13 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1974), 101–102; Jaap Mansfeld, "Providence and the Destruction of the Universe," in *Studies in Hellenistic Religions*, ed. M.J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 146 n. 52; Pieter W. van der Horst, "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity," in *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 227–51; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 482–86; Knut Usener, "Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur," in *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, ed. Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, BTS 137 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013), 149–81.

39 Cf. Bremmer, *Maidens, Magic and Martyrs*, 378–79, 465.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

was burned alive in a posture of crucifixion,'[40] it is equally true that our author is not interested in the manner of his execution and does not have any information about it. In the New Testament, the idea of Peter's death can be found only in John 21.18–19. According to Nicklas, this does not necessarily mean that our *Apocalypse* refers to that text; 'it is possible that there were other, even older traditions, probably related or parallel to the one in the Gospel of John.'[41] It is possible indeed, but hardly necessary to postulate such an unknown tradition. Just as our author reworked Matthew, so he probably reworked, directly or indirectly, John in this case.

2 The Date and Place of Composition of the *Apocalypse of Peter*

With the words of Jesus, we have come to the end of the passages about martyrdom. Let us now turn to the complicated question of the Sitz im Leben of our *Apocalypse*: where and when was it written? In the first decade of 2000, this question was fiercely debated between Eibert Tigchelaar, Tobias Nicklas and Enrico Norelli,[42] where Nicklas had a preview of the paper by Norelli when he wrote his own contribution, but Norelli only entered the debate before the most recent contributions by Nicklas. As Norelli especially analyses Tigchelaar's and Nicklas' arguments against identifying the eschatological false Messiah with Simon Bar Kokhba, I will approach the problem from a different angle and concentrate first on the question of provenance.

Norelli rightly notes the patchwork character of the *Apocalypse*, but does not seem to draw the right conclusions from this observation. The character of the text must mean that even if the identification with Bar Kokhba is correct, the text is not necessarily written in Palestine as Bauckham argued. Norelli realises this also, and at the end of his article he suggests that the *Apocalypse*

40 Thus Timothy D. Barnes, "'Another Shall Gird Thee': Probative Evidence for the Death of Peter," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 95. Barnes also suggests (p. 81) that the text refers to the so-called *tunica molesta*, a special tunic interwoven with inflammable materials (cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 14.5; Martial 4.86.8, 10.25.5, 10.86.8; Juvenal 8.235; Tertullian, *Nat.* 1.18.10 and *Mart.* 5.1), but the text is too vague to be certain at this point; see also John Granger Cook, *Roman Attitudes toward the Christians: From Claudius to Hadrian*, WUNT 261 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 77f.

41 Nicklas, '"Drink the Cup"', 189.

42 Tigchelaar, 'Is the Liar Bar Kokhba?'; Norelli, 'L'*adversaire* eschatologique dans l'*Apocalypse de Pierre*'; Tobias Nicklas, "Christliche Apokryphen als Spiegel der Vielfalt frühchristlichen Lebens: Schlaglichter, Beispiele und methodische Probleme," *ASE* 23 (2006): 27–44 and '"Insider" und "Outsider".

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

was written in Syria.[43] In that case, Antioch would be a good candidate. On the other hand, as I have argued before, the usage of Orphic material—the borboros, the ethical categories, the categories of crimes and the scourging angels[44]—rather points to Egypt, perhaps Alexandria, where Jews were acquainted with Orphic material.[45] Moreover, there is a reference to the worship of cats, which we also find in other Jewish Egyptian texts.[46] Although the worship of cats was known outside Egypt, a reference to it in this context would make sense most in Egypt itself. Admittedly, Nicklas has objected that the Greek version (33A) does not mention the cats.[47] Yet it seems much more plausible that the lost Greek Vorlage of the lost Arabic translation, which was the basis of the existing Ethiopic translation, contained the cats than that it added the cats. Why would it do so? It is clear and undisputed that the existing Greek fragments display a reworking of the text, and they clearly have abbreviated the original text in Chapter 33A as a comparison with 10E immediately demonstrates. As Peter van Minnen has observed, 'the Akhmim text drops this reference, but then it drops many more precise references as well.'[48] Nicklas also suggests that the usage of the Septuagint in our text likewise fits better Egypt than Palestine. Although I am not sure that the Jewish Christians of Palestine could not have used a Greek text of Psalm 24, which features in our Apocalyse (14E),[49] it is indeed the case that the Septuagint was read more in Egypt than in Palestine.[50] I am therefore persuaded by Nicklas that my later, more complex model of a text partially

43 Norelli, 'L'adversaire', 316 (patchwork), 317 (Syria).

44 For the angels, see my "The Long Latin Version of the *Vision of Ezra*: Date, Place and Tour of Hell," in *Figures of Ezra*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer, Veronika Hirschberger, and Tobias Nicklas (Leuven: Peeters, 2018), 210f.

45 Bremmer, "The *Apocalypse of Peter*: Greek or Jewish?," 14, updated and elaborated in *Maidens, Magic and Martyrs*, 280 and 282–83.

46 *Sapientia Salomonis* 12.24, 15.18; *Letter to Aristeas* 138; *Or. Sib.* 3.30–1, Frag. 3.22, 27–30, 5.278–80; Philo, *Decal.* 76–80, *Contempl.* 8, *Legat.* 139, 163. Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 186–87 argues that we find references to such worship also in Jewish Palestinian texts, such as *T. Mos.* 2.7; *L.A.B.* 44.5, but these are less specific.

47 Nicklas, "'Insider' und 'outsider'," 46 and "Jewish, Christian, Greek?," 35 (cats and reptiles).

48 Peter van Minnen, "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 29.

49 Cf. J. van Ruiten, "The Old Testament Quotations in the *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 158–73.

50 Nicklas, "'Insider" und "outsider'", 39; Jan Joosten, "The Origin of the Septuagint Canon," in *Die Septuaginta—Orte und Intentionen*, ed. Siegfried Kreuzer et al., WUNT 361 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 688–99.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

written in Palestine, partially in Egypt is not really convincing.[51] All evidence we have at the moment points to Egypt, in particular to Alexandria.[52]

An Egyptian provenance needs not exclude the occurrence of Bar Kokhba, as Egypt and Palestine were always in close contact with one another. This means that the identification of the false Messiah can still be correct. Bauckham's and Norelli's arguments in this connection do not prove the identification, but they have made a reasonable case. Admittedly, the labelling as 'false Messiah' (2.7–9E) and 'Liar' (2.10E) can be explained as traditional ways of slandering, and his 'murder of many martyrs' (2.11E) is not exactly attested in our sources as such,[53] but taken together I would say that Ockham's razor seems to fit Bar Kokhba best. On the other hand, Nicklas rightly stresses that after the mention of the false Messiah the text no longer mentions Jews or even seems to be concerned with Israel. On the contrary, as he notes, the judgment on the nations (6.2E) and the focus on idolatry (6.7–9E, 10E; 33A) better fit a pagan country like Egypt than Israel; we should also remember that Philo was deeply concerned with idolatry.[54]

This leaves the vexed problem of the date. I would like to point to two aspects of the text that seem to me to suggest a date around AD 150 and which have not yet been mentioned in the recent discussions. First, as my Erfurt colleague Markus Vinzent has stressed at various occasions,[55] there is no certain reference to narrative parts of the Gospels before Marcion. Given the usage of the Matthean Transfiguration scene in our *Apocalypse*, this suggests a terminus post quem of about AD 140. On the other hand, the clear presence of the Naherwartung in our text is hardly to be expected much after AD 150 when belief in the Naherwartung petered out, except for its revival in Montanism.[56]

---

51 Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," 308f.

52 See now Nicklas' contribution to this book.

53 As noted by Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba?," 66–68; see also Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek?," 36f.

54 Nicklas, "'Insider" und "outsider"', 41; for Philo, see also the detailed discussion by Karl-Gustav Sandelin, *Attraction and Danger of Alien Religion*, WUNT 290 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 27–76; Daniel Barbu, *Naissance de l'idolâtrie: image, identité, religion* (Liège: Presses universitaires de Liège, 2016), 232–42.

55 See especially his *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014). For the problems with the intertextuality of the gospels, see also the interesting observations of Candida R. Moss, "Nailing Down and Tying Up: Lessons in Intertextual Impossibility from the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*," *VC* 67 (2013): 117–36.

56 Kurt Aland, *Neutestamentliche Entwürfe* (München: Kaiser, 1979), 124–82.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Now is such a date of about AD 150 reasonable? I think it is, when we look at the early reception of our *Apocalypse*.[57] Let us first pay attention to the relationship between the Second Sibylline Oracle and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which has been more or less neglected in current discussions, those of myself included. As it happens, we have more recently seen the publication of two commentaries on the Second Sibylline Oracle, by Jane Lightfoot and Olaf Waßmuth, of whom Lightfoot discusses the relationship with the *Apocalypse of Peter* in close detail but has little to say about the Oracle's time and place, whereas Waßmuth discusses the time and place of the Oracle in more detail but has virtually nothing to say about the relationship with our *Apocalypse*.[58] Now Lightfoot has shown that the Second Sibylline Oracle from verse 194 onwards is a sustained, albeit fairly free, adaptation and sometimes reordering of our *Apocalypse*.[59] This gives us a terminus ante quem for our *Apocalypse*. Unfortunately, the date of the Oracle cannot be established with any certainty, as it is not cited by any Church Father,[60] but Waßmuth persuasively argues for the second half of the second century, because the Oracle is used by the Eight Sibylline Oracle, which must be dated to the early third century at the latest.[61]

Now if the Second Sibylline Oracle constitutes a terminus ante quem regarding our *Apocalypse*, what about other early testimonies? Grünstäudl has fascinatingly shown that Clement of Alexandria, when he was still influenced by Pantaenus, i.e. in his earliest works,[62] quotes from a commentary on the Psalms that contained quotations of our *Apocalypse*. We don't know anything of this commentary, but it will hardly have been written very early: presumably somewhere between 150 and 180. Grünstäudl notes that the commentary attaches a certain authority to the Kerygma Petri, which plausibly dates from about AD 150. This puts the commentary perhaps about AD 160–170.[63] Consequently, this insight gives us a certain terminus ante quem of our *Apocalypse* of sometime before that date.

57 I supplement here Attila Jakab, "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 174–86.

58 Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 97–106; Olaf Waßmuth, *Sibyllinische Orakel 1–2: Studien und Kommentar*, AJEC 76 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 501: 'Sollte eine Abhangigkeit von der (athiopischen) Petrusapokalypse bestehen (was ich fur unwahrscheinlich halte)'. Unfortunately, his book appeared too late to take Lightfoot fully into account, as he notes himself (p. xii).

59 Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 137–44 and 560–63 (with a useful table of the parallels).

60 Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 104–06.

61 Wassmuth, *Sibyllinische Orakel 1/2*, 486–87, 501–02.

62 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 245–49, 281.

63 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 91f.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

A third early testimony we find in the famous pagan satirist Lucian of Samosata. We know from his pamphlet Peregrinus that he was quite well informed about the Christian movement,[64] knew one or more Gospels,[65] but also used the *Apocalypse of Peter* in his True Histories.[66] Unfortunately, once again, the date of this book is uncertain, as no historical details are present.[67] However, one of our best contemporary experts on Lucian, Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, writes me: 'my feeling is that it is the work of a rather experienced storyteller and parodist, so I would not put it early in Lucian's career (not earlier than 160, I would think)' (per email 14-4-2017). Consequently, Lucian could have read our *Apocalypse* in Alexandria where he spent his last years and died in the AD 180s or early 190s.

A fourth early testimony can be found in the Epistula Apostolorum, which quotes several passages from our *Apocalypse*.[68] It would carry us too far to discuss in detail its date and place. Let it suffice to say that in my opinion the discussion by Carl Schmidt (1868–1938), who located the Epistula in Asia Minor in the 160s in his editio princeps of the Coptic translation, has not been surpassed.[69] For our purpose I would like to add two arguments regarding time and place. First, our compatriot W.C. van Unnik (1910–1978) noticed that all the texts with the rule 'neither to add nor to subtract', which occurs in Chapter 29E (the Coptic version is more discursive), 'datent de la même époque (170–200),

64 Cf. Jan N. Bremmer, "Peregrinus' Christian Career," in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, ed. Anthony Hilhorst, Émile Puech, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 729–47, updated in my *Maidens, Magic and Martyrs*, 65–79 and Jan N. Bremmer, "Lucian on Peregrinus and Alexander of Abonuteichos: A Sceptical View of Two Religious Entrepeneurs," in *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, ed. Georgia Petridou, Richard L. Gordon, and Jörg Rüpke (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2017), 47–76.

65 Jan N. Bremmer, "Richard Reitzenstein's *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*," in *Credible, Incredible: The Miraculous in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Tobias Nicklas and Janet E. Spittler, WUNT 321 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 2–5.

66 As shown by Peter von Möllendorff, "Christliche Apokalypsen und ihr mimetisches Potential in der paganen Bildungskultur. Ein Beitrag zu Lukians Wahren Geschichten," in *Die Bibel im Dialog der Schriften: Konzepte intertextueller Bibellektüre*, ed. Stefan Alkier and Richard B. Hays, Neutestamentische Entwürfe zur Theologie 10 (Tübingen; Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2005), 179–94 and idem., *Auf der Suche nach der verlogenen Wahrheit: Lukians Wahre Geschichten* (Tübingen: Narr, 2000), 427–30.

67 C.P. Jones, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 167.

68 Jakab, "The Reception of the Apocalypse of Peter in Ancient Christianity," 176.

69 Carl Schmidt, *Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung: ein katholisch-apostolisches Sendschreiben des 2. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919), 361–401, the chronology conveniently summarized by Charles E. Hill, "The *Epistula Apostolorum*: An Asian Tract from the Time of Polycarp," *JECS* 7 (1999): 19–21.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

en partie du même milieu (l'Asie Mineure avec laquelle Tertullien paraît avoir été en relation).'[70] Second, the author of the Epistula had clearly experienced earthquakes and a terrible plague. Now earthquakes occurred regularly in Asia Minor,[71] and there is nothing in the text to point to a specific one, but the plague is described in great detail:

> severe and prolonged plague; so much, and so sudden, that there will be no grave for the dead. And the children and parents will be carried away on one bed; parents will not turn to their children, nor will children turn to their parents, or relatives to their relatives; and those remaining, who are left in despair, will arise and see those who left them when they were carried away. For the plague is full of hostility and affliction, of jealousy and murder; from one is taken, and to another is given; and what comes afterward is worse than this (34E).[72]

Undoubtedly, the most devastating plague in late antiquity was the great Antonine plague, which raged from about AD 165 to 180. Schmidt could not yet have known this because only after his publication a number of inscriptions have been found that show the concern of people regarding this plague.[73] There can be no doubt that this is the plague of the second century AD. Needless to say, its time perfectly fits the date proposed by Schmidt.

---

70 W.C. van Unnik, "De la règle μήτε προσθεῖναι μήτε ἀφελεῖν dans l'histoire du canon," *VC* 3 (1949): 9; the essay is reprinted in his *Sparsa Collecta*, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1973–2014) 2.123–56.

71 A. Herrmann, "Erdbeben," *RAC* 5 (1962): 1070–1113; Emanuela Guidoboni et al., *Catalogue of Ancient Earthquakes in the Mediterranean Area up to the 10th Century* (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica, 1994); Gerhard Waldherr, *Erdbeben, das außergewöhnliche Normale: Zur Rezeption seismischer Aktivitäten in literarischen Quellen vom 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1997).

72 I quote from the new translation, with extensive notes, by Julian V. Hills, *The Epistle of the Apostles* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge, 2009), 62f.

73 C.P. Jones, "Ten Dedications 'To the Gods and Goddesses' and the Antonine Plague," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005): 293–301; C.P. Jones, "Addendum to *JRA* 18 (2005): Cosa and the Antonine Plague?," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 368–69; R.S.O. Tomlin, "'Drive Away the Cloud of Plague': A Greek Amulet from Roman London," in *Life in the Limes: Studies of the People and Objects of the Roman Frontiers*, ed. Rob Collins and Frances McIntosh (Oxbow Books, 2014), 197–205; C.P. Jones, "An Amulet from London and Events Surrounding the Antonine Plague," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 29 (2016): 469–72, with the additions in no. 270 of his Bibliography: https://www.academia.edu/32205817/Revised_bibliography_02_04_2017. In general: Elio Lo Cascio, ed., *L' impatto della "peste antonina"* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2012).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3 The *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter

What can we conclude? Despite the progress we hope to have made, it is still difficult to reach a precise Sitz im Leben of our *Apocalypse*. Yet it seems clear that it was written in a time of persecution, given the references to martyrs and people that have betrayed the faithful. At the same time, the *Apocalypse* shows that at the time of its composition the Christians had already coined the term martyr for those who had died for their faith in Christ but also ascribed the power of intercession to those martyrs, making our *Apocalypse* the first martyr text of early Christianity.[74] It is very improbable that we should locate those developments very early. Given both these martyrological aspects, which well predate the Martyrdom of Polycarp and the Acts of Paul and Thecla, and the probable knowledge of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in the AD 170s and 180s, the most likely date of composition of our *Apocalypse* is around AD 150, thus refuting the connection with the Bar Kokhba revolt. The most likely place, as we have seen, is Alexandria (§ 2).

What does this date tell us about the date of 2 Peter? From our early witnesses to the *Apocalypse*, it is only the Second Sibylline Oracle that almost certainly knew 2 Peter, as Jane Lightfoot, building on Thomas Kraus' work, has shown on the basis of a series of correspondences between the Oracle and 2 Peter.[75] This should not really surprise us. If the author of the Oracle was interested in the *Apocalypse*, why not also in 2 Peter? As between our *Apocalypse* and 2 Peter there was a growing influence of Paul (whom 2 Peter does not really like, but has to acknowledge), there had to have been some time between our *Apocalypse* and 2 Peter. As the Oracle probably dates from the second half of the second century, as we have seen, this will have been towards the end of that century as it knows 2 Peter. I would date 2 Peter, then, to about the 180s and the Oracle to the end of the second century. In any case, the Oracle is the terminus ante quem of 2 Peter, certainly well predating Origen, whom

74 See also the considerations of Tobias Nicklas, "Petrusoffenbarung, Christusoffenbarung und ihre Funktion: Autoritätskonstruktion in der Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Author Concepts and Strategies of Authorization in Early Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. Jörg Frey, Franz Tóth, and Michael Jost, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

75 Thomas J. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 359; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 253, who has been overlooked by Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 226–32.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Grünstäudl considered the first witness to 2 Peter,[76] which he persuasively located in Alexandria too.[77]

With these considerations we have come to the end of our reaction to Jörg Frey's Lectures. I am conscious that my contribution does not focus on the heart of Frey's Lectures. But I do hope that it contributes to a better understanding of the world in which the author of 2 Peter lived and worked. This Alexandrian world, which clearly comprised the *Apocalypse of Peter*, may well have comprised the Second Sibylline Oracle too, but that is a different problem altogether.[78]

Bibliography

Aland, Kurt. *Neutestamentliche Entwürfe*. München: Kaiser, 1979.

Ameling, Walter. "The Christian Lapsi in Smyrna, 250 A.D. (*Martyrium Pionii* 12–14)." *VC* 62 (2008): 133–60.

Barbu, Daniel. *Naissance de l'idolâtrie: image, identité, religion*. Liège: Presses universitaires de Liège, 2016.

Barclay, John M.G. "Deviance and Apostasy: Some Applications of Deviance Theory to First-Century Judaism and Christianity." In *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, edited by Philip F. Esler, 114–27. London; New York: Routledge, 1995.

Barnes, Timothy D. "'Another Shall Gird Thee': Probative Evidence for the Death of Peter." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, edited by Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado, 76–98. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Bauckham, Richard J. *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter." *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87.

Bauckham, Richard J., and Paolo Marrassini. "Apocalypse de Pierre." In *Ecrits apocryphes chrétiens*, edited by François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, 1:747–74. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 442. Paris: Gallimard, 1997.

76 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 52–74.

77 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 283; see also Nicklas' contribution to this volume.

78 I am most grateful to Alessandro Bausi for his generous responses to my many questions, to Matthijs den Dulk, Birgit van der Lans and Tobias Nicklas for comments, and to Meghan Henning for kindly and skillfully correcting my English.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bausi, Alessandro. "Towards a Re-Edition of the Ethiopic Dossier of the *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Few Remarks on the Ethiopic Manuscript Witnesses." *Apocrypha* 27 (2016): 179–96.

Bremmer, Jan N. "From Heroes to Saints and from Martyrological to Hagiographical Discourse." In *Sakralität und Heldentum. Zum Relationsgeflecht von Heroischem und Religiösem*, edited by Feliz Heinzer, Jörn Leonhard, and Ralf von den Hoff, 35–66. Würzburg: Ergon, 2017.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Lucian on Peregrinus and Alexander of Abonuteichos: A Sceptical View of Two Religious Entrepeneurs." In *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire*, edited by Georgia Petridou, Richard L. Gordon, and Jörg Rüpke, 47–76. Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2017.

Bremmer, Jan N. *Maidens, Magic, and Martyrs in Early Christianity: Collected Essays I*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, edited by Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, and Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Peregrinus' Christian Career." In *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez*, edited by Anthony Hilhorst, Émile Puech, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, 729–47. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Richard Reitzenstein's *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*." In *Credible, Incredible: The Miraculous in the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by Tobias Nicklas and Janet E. Spittler, 1–19. WUNT 321. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Bremmer, Jan N. "The Apocalypse of Peter: Greek or Jewish?" In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 1–14. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Bremmer, Jan N. "The Long Latin Version of the *Vision of Ezra*: Date, Place and Tour of Hell." In *Figures of Ezra*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer, Veronika Hirschberger, and Tobias Nicklas, 200–227. Leuven: Peeters, 2018.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Bühler, Winfried. *Zenobii Athoi proverbia V*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.

Burkert, Walter. *Lore and science in ancient Pythagoreanism*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Chaine, Joseph. "Cosmogonie aquatique et conflagration finale d'après la Secunda Petri." *RB* 46 (1937): 207–16.

Collins, John J. *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*. SBLDS 13. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1974.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Cook, John Granger. *Roman Attitudes toward the Christians: From Claudius to Hadrian*. WUNT 261. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Crook, Zebra. "Agents of Apostasy: Apostasy in a Collectivistic Culture." In *Conversion and Initiation in Antiquity: Shifting Identities—Creating Change*, edited by Birgitte Secher Bøgh, 119–34. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014.

Dassmann, Ernst. *Sündenvergebung durch Taufe, Busse und Martyrerfürbitte in den Zeugnissen frühchristlicher Frömmigkeit und Kunst*. Münster: Aschendorff, 1973.

Dochhorn, Jan. *Die Apokalypse des Mose: Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*. TSAJ 106. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.

Faessler, Franz. *Der hagios-Begriff bei Origenes: Ein Beitrag zum Hagios-Problem*. Paradosis 13. Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1958.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Guidoboni, Emanuela, Alberto Comastri, Giusto Traina, and Brian Phillips. *Catalogue of Ancient Earthquakes in the Mediterranean Area up to the 10th Century*. Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica, 1994.

Harnack, Adolf von. *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*. TU 9.2. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893.

Henning, Meghan. *Educating Early Christians through the Rhetoric of Hell: "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" as Paideia in Matthew and the Early Church*. WUNT 2/382. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

Henten, J.W. van. "Martyrium II." *RAC* 22 (2011): 300–325.

Herrmann, A. "Erdbeben." *RAC* 5 (1962): 1070–1113.

Hill, Charles E. "The *Epistula Apostolorum*: An Asian Tract from the Time of Polycarp." *JECS* 7 (1999): 1–53.

Hills, Julian V. *The Epistle of the Apostles*. Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge, 2009.

Horst, Pieter W. van der. "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity." In *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction*, 227–51. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994.

Hurtado, Larry W. *Why on Earth Did Anyone Become a Christian in the First Three Centuries?*. Milwaukee, Wi: Marquette UP, 2016.

Jakab, Attila. "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 174–86. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Jones, C.P. "Addendum to *JRA* 18 (2005): Cosa and the Antonine Plague?." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 368–69.

Jones, C.P. "An Amulet from London and Events Surrounding the Antonine Plague." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 29 (2016): 469–72.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Jones, C.P. *Culture and Society in Lucian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Jones, C.P. "Ten Dedications 'To the Gods and Goddesses' and the Antonine Plague." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005): 293–301.

Joosten, Jan. "The Origin of the Septuagint Canon." In *Die Septuaginta—Orte und Intentionen*, edited by Siegfried Kreuzer, Martin Meiser, Marcus Sigismund, Martin Karrer, and Wolfgang Kraus, 688–99. WUNT 361. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Acherousia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext." *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe." *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Fürbitte für die Toten im frühen Christentum: 'Ich werde … den gewähren, den sie aus der Strafe erbitten.'" In *Das Gebet im Neuen Testament*, edited by Hans Klein, Vasile Mihoc, Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, and Christos Karakolis, 355–96. WUNT 249. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Kraus, Thomas J. "P.Vindob.G 39756 + Bodl. MS Gr. th. f. 4 [P]: Fragmente eines Codex der griechischen Petrus-Apokalypse." *BSAP* 40 (2003): 45–61.

Kraus, Thomas J. *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/136. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Kulik, Alexander. *3 Baruch: Greek-Slavonic Apocalypse of Baruch*. Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2010.

Lightfoot, J.L. *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Lintott, A.W. "*Delator* and *index*: Informers and Accusers at Rome from the Republic to the Early Principate." *Accordia Research Papers* 9 (2003 2001): 105–22.

Lo Cascio, Elio, ed. *L'impatto della "peste antonina."* Bari: Edipuglia, 2012.

Mansfeld, Jaap. "Providence and the Destruction of the Universe." In *Studies in Hellenistic Religions*, edited by M.J. Vermaseren, 129–88. Leiden: Brill, 1979.

Marrassini, Paolo. "Scoperta e riscoperte dell'Apocalisse di Pietro fra Greco, Arabo ed Etiopico." In *I papiri letterari Cristiani*, edited by Guido Bastianini and Angelo Casanova, 147–60. Firenze: Istituto papirologico "G. Vitelli," 2011.

Minnen, Peter van. "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 15–39. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Möllendorff, Peter von. *Auf der Suche nach der verlogenen Wahrheit: Lukians Wahre Geschichten*. Tübingen: Narr, 2000.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Möllendorff, Peter von. "Christliche Apokalypsen und ihr mimetisches Potential in der paganen Bildungskultur. Ein Beitrag zu Lukians Wahren Geschichten." In *Die Bibel im Dialog der Schriften: Konzepte intertextueller Bibellektüre*, edited by Stefan Alkier and Richard B. Hays, 179–94. Neutestamentische Entwürfe zur Theologie 10. Tübingen; Basel: A. Francke Verlag, 2005.

Moss, Candida R. *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

Moss, Candida R. "Nailing Down and Tying Up: Lessons in Intertextual Impossibility from the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*." *VC* 67 (2013): 117–36.

Moss, Candida R. *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom*. New York: HarperCollins, 2013.

Müller, C.D.G. "The Apocalypse of Peter." In *New Testament Apocrypha*, edited by W. Schneemelcher, Tr. R. McL. Wilson, 2:620–38. Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992.

Nicklas, Tobias. "Christliche Apokryphen als Spiegel der Vielfalt frühchristlichen Lebens: Schlaglichter, Beispiele und methodische Probleme." *ASE* 23 (2006): 27–44.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times." In *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, edited by Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, 183–200. LNTS 522. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, edited by Walter Ameling, 35–48. Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011.

Nicklas, Tobias. "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria." In *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, edited by Luca Arcari, 27–46. STAC 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Nicklas, Tobias. "Petrusoffenbarung, Christusoffenbarung und ihre Funktion: Autoritätskonstruktion in der Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Author Concepts and Strategies of Authorization in Early Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature*, edited by Jörg Frey, Franz Tóth, and Michael Jost. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming.

Norden, Eduard. "Die Petrusapokalypse und ihre antiken Vorbilder." In *Kleine Schriften zum klassischen Altertum*, Reprint 1966, 218–33. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1893.

Norelli, Enrico. "L'adversaire eschatologique dans l'Apocalypse de Pierre." In *Les forces du bien et du mal dans les premiers siècles de l'église*, edited by Yves-Marie Blanchard, Bernard Pouderon, and Maddalena Scopello, 291–317. Théologie historique 118. Paris: Beauchesne, 2011.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Norelli, Enrico. "Situation des Apocryphes Pétriniens." *Apocrypha* 2 (1991): 31–83.

Petraccia Lucernoni, Maria Federica. *Indices e delatores nell'antica Roma*. Milano: LED Edizioni Universitarie, 2014.

Rebenich, Stefan. *Theodor Mommsen und Adolf Harnack*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997.

Rivière, Yann. *Les délateurs sous l'Empire romain*. Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2012.

Roessli, J.-M. "Loisy et les Apocryphes Pétriniens découverts à Akhmîm-Panopolis." In *Gnose et manichéisme: entre les oasis d'Égypte et la Route de la Soie : hommage à Jean-Daniel Dubois*, edited by Anna Van den Kerchove and Luciana Grabriela Soares Santoprete, 771–90. Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Sciences Religieuses 176. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

Ruiten, J. van. "The Old Testament Quotations in the *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 158–73. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Rutledge, Steven H. *Imperial Inquisitions: Prosecutors and Informants from Tiberius to Domitian*. New York; London: Routledge, 2001.

Sandelin, Karl-Gustav. *Attraction and Danger of Alien Religion*. WUNT 290. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Schmidt, Carl. *Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung: ein katholisch-apostolisches Sendschreiben des 2. Jahrhunderts*. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919.

Seeliger, Hans Reinhard, and Wolfgang Wischmeyer, eds. *Märtyrerliteratur*. TU 172. Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2015.

Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 63–77. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Tomlin, R.S.O. "'Drive Away the Cloud of Plague': A Greek Amulet from Roman London." In *Life in the Limes: Studies of the People and Objects of the Roman Frontiers.*, edited by Rob Collins and Frances McIntosh, 197–205. Oxbow Books, 2014.

Trumbower, Jeffrey A. *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity*. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Unnik, W.C. van. "De la règle μήτε προσθεῖναι μήτε ἀφελεῖν dans l'histoire du canon." *VC* 3 (1949): 1–36.

Usener, Knut. "Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur." In *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, edited by Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, 149–81. BTS 137. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013.

Vinzent, Markus. *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels*. Leuven: Peeters, 2014.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Waldherr, Gerhard. *Erdbeben, das außergewöhnliche Normale: Zur Rezeption seismischer Aktivitäten in literarischen Quellen vom 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* Stuttgart: Steiner, 1997.

Waßmuth, Olaf. *Sibyllinische Orakel 1–2: Studien und Kommentar*. AJEC 76. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011.

Wilson, Stephen G. *Leaving the Fold: Apostates and Defectors in Antiquity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 4

Petrus-Diskurse in Alexandria: Eine Fortführung der Gedanken von Jörg Frey

Tobias Nicklas

Die Frage nach frühen christlichen Schulen, z.B. einer johanneischen Schule oder einer Paulusschule, wird heute kontroverser als in früheren Jahrzehnten behandelt.[1] Mehr und mehr neigt man dazu, den früher recht häufig, ja fast inflationär verwendeten Begriff der „Schule" in nur vorsichtiger, zurückhaltender Weise und nur im weitesten Sinne des Wortes zu verwenden.[2] Dies gilt in besonderem Maße für die bis in die letzten Jahre hinein immer wieder diskutierte Idee einer Petrus-Schule, die dann in Rom anzusiedeln wäre.[3] Selbst

1 Grundlegend etwa zur Paulusschule Hans Conzelmann, „Die Schule des Paulus," in *Theologia crucis—signum crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag*, hg. von Carl Andresen und Günter Klein (Tübingen, 1979), 85–96, dem z.B. (besonders einflussreich) Udo Schnelle, *Paulus. Leben und Denken* (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003), 146–60, folgt, welcher gerade die Existenz deuteropaulinischer Schriften wie Eph, Kol und 2 Thess als Zeichen einer solchen Schultätigkeit deutet (S. 151). Zur johanneischen Schule besonders einflussreich R. Alan Culpepper, *The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-School Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools*, SBLDS 26 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1975).—Kritisch dagegen z.B. Thomas Schmeller, *Schulen im Neuen Testament? Zur Stellung des Urchristentums in der Bildungswelt seiner Zeit*, HBS 30 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001).

2 So z.B. sehr sinnvoll K. Backhaus, „Der Hebräerbrief und die Paulus-Schule," *BZ* 37 (1993): 183–208, hier 183: „Wir verstehen unter der Paulus-Schule im weitesten Sinn Kreise von frühchristlichen Traditionsträgern aus dem Einflußbereich der paulinischen Missionsgemeinden, deren Selbstverständnis einerseits von einer Pflege der Personaltradition des Apostels Paulus bestimmt wird und die sich andererseits der Wahrung und Entfaltung der paulinischen Theologie widmen."

3 Zur petrinischen Schule in Rom besonders einflussreich (von 1 Petr her) John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000); John H. Elliott, „Peter, Silvanus and Mark in 1 Peter and Sociological-Exegetical Perspectives on a Petrine Group in Rome," in *Wort in der Zeit neutestamentliche Studien: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag*, hg. von Wilfrid Haubeck und Michael Bachmann (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 250–67; (etwas zurückhaltender) Leonhard Goppelt, *Der erste Petrusbrief*, KEK 12/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978), 69; (mit Fokus auf 2 Petr) Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 149–51 (hier anhand von 2 Petr, Hermas und 1–2 Clem); anhand der Kombination 1 Petr, 2 Petr und Judas M.L. Soards, „1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School," *ANRW* 2.25.5 (1988): 3827–49, sowie Knoch, Otto, „Gab es eine Petrusschule in Rom? Überlegungen zu einer bedeutsamen

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_005
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

wenn man nicht so weit gehen möchte, überhaupt anzuzweifeln, dass der historische Petrus jemals Rom erreicht habe,[4] sind die Argumente für eine derartige Schule in hohem Maße vage. Erstens bleibt höchst umstritten, welche dem Petrus zugeschriebenen oder zumindest in die Nähe der Petrus-Figur gebrachten Schriften des frühen Christentums überhaupt in Rom entstanden sein mögen, zweitens unterscheiden sich auch viele der „petrinischen" Schlüsseltexte des frühen Christentums z.T. enorm voneinander—man bedenke nur die auch von Jörg Frey angesprochenen sprachlichen und inhaltlichen Differenzen zwischen 1 und 2 Petr.[5] Drittens schließlich ist selbst da, wo man bestimmte „petrinische" (oder angeblich verwandte) Schriften einander zuordnet,[6] kaum aus diesen Schriften direkt die Existenz einer Schule bzw. eines an Petrus interessierten oder gar auf ihn selbst zurückgehenden Schulbetriebs zurückzuschließen. So denke ich, dass die bis in jüngere Zeit vorgebrachte These einer petrinischen Schule im Rom mit gutem Gewissen ad acta gelegt werden darf.[7]

Jörg Freys Nijmegener Prestige Lectures legen nun eine neue Verbindung wenigstens einiger petrinischer Texte nahe, die ihn, ohne von einer „Petrus-Schule" sprechen zu müssen, auf einen breiten „Petrus-Diskurs" bzw. „Petrus-Diskurse" schließen lassen.[8] Im Kern dieses Clusters stehen für Frey der zweite

---

Frage," *SNTU.A* 16 (1991): 105–26.—Zum aktuellsten Stand vgl. Friedrich Wilhelm Horn, „Die Petrus-Schule in Rom: Forschungsgeschichtliche Notizen zur Abfassungssituation des 1. Petrusbriefs," in *Bedrängnis und Identität Studien zu Situation, Kommunikation und Theologie des 1. Petrusbriefes*, hg. von David S. Du Toit, BZNW 200 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 3–20.

4 Zur weiterhin anhaltenden Diskussion vgl. z.B. die Beiträge in Stefan Heid, ed., *Petrus und Paulus in Rom: Eine interdisziplinäre Debatte* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2011).

5 Vgl. p. 14–15 im vorliegenden Band—Zur (weiterhin kontrovers diskutierten) Frage, wie nahe 1 Petr an paulinisches Denken zu rücken ist, vgl. besonders wichtig Jens Herzer, *Petrus oder Paulus? Studien über das Verhältnis des ersten Petrusbriefes zur paulinischen Tradition*, WUNT 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998).

6 Wie wenig haltbar die These eines auf eine petrinische Schule weisenden Zusammenhangs von 2 Petr, 1 Clem, 2 Clem und Hermas ist, zeigt die Arbeit von Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 187–200.

7 So auch der Tenor bei Jörg Frey, „Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'," in *Petrus in Rom*, hg. von Jörg Frey und Martin Wallraff, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck).

8 Dabei ist, wenn ich recht verstehe, der Begriff „Diskurs" bewusst weit gefasst. Der Gedanke nimmt ein Modell von Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003) auf. Ich habe selbst in jüngeren Publikationen immer wieder ein Modell des frühen Christentums in dynamischen Diskursen versucht zu vertreten. Hierzu vgl. z.B. Tobias Nicklas, „Jenseits der Kategorien: Elchasai und die Elchasaiten," in *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence: The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, hg. von Joseph Verheyden, Tobias Nicklas, und

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Petrusbrief, dazu die (ursprüngliche griechische, heute als Gesamt nur in äthiopischer Sprache überlieferte) Offenbarung des Petrus und schließlich das (nur in Teilen erhaltene) Kerygma Petri.[9] Zumindest für den zweiten Petrusbrief und die Offenbarung des Petrus sieht Frey die Möglichkeit einer Verortung im Alexandria der ersten Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts, die Offenbarung des Petrus wiederum habe—anders als üblicherweise vermutet—dem zweiten Petrusbrief als Vorlage gedient, nicht umgekehrt. Damit entwickelt Frey seine „New Perspective" im Dialog mit einer Doppelthese, die in den vergangenen Jahren (in stetem Dialog mit ihm) in Regensburg entwickelt wurde: Einerseits habe ich in den vergangenen Jahren die These begründet, die Offenbarung des Petrus sei als ein früher Schlüsseltext für die Entstehung des Christentums in Alexandria zu deuten,[10] andererseits hat mein Schüler Wolfgang Grünstäudl Argumente für die Abhängigkeit des 2 Petr von der Offenbarung des Petrus entwickelt und auch eine Abfassung des 2 Petr in Alexandria wahrscheinlich machen können.[11] Vor diesem Hintergrund möchte ich hier nicht noch einmal die m.E. in ihrer Gesamtheit überzeugenden Argumente diskutieren, die den Kern der ersten These Jörg Freys bilden, sondern von hier aus versuchen, die gewonnenen Bausteine eines Clusters von mit Alexandria verbundenen Petrus-Texten miteinander zu verbinden und aus ihnen—bewusst etwas spekulativ—Profile einer möglichen Entwicklung des Christentums in Alexandrien zu erarbeiten. Dabei jedoch scheint es mir angebracht, das von Frey angesetzte „petrinische Cluster" noch einmal um einen Text zu erweitern, nämlich die koptische Petrusapokalypse aus Nag Hammadi (NHC VII,3), deren Bezug zum

Elisabeth Hernitscheck, WUNT 388 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 177–200; Tobias Nicklas, „Parting of the Ways? Probleme eines Konzepts," in *Juden—Heiden—Christen? Religiöse Inklusionen und Exklusionen im römischen Kleinasien bis Kaiser Decius*, hg. von Stefan Alkier und Hartmut Leppin, WUNT 400 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 21–42.

9 Vgl. p. 22–23 im vorliegenden Band.

10 Hierzu sind v.a. die folgenden Beiträge relevant: Tobias Nicklas, „'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, hg. von Walter Ameling, Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011), 35–48, sowie (noch konkreter und mit neuen Argumenten) Tobias Nicklas, „Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, hg. von Luca Arcari, STAC 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 27–46—beide mit ausführlicher Diskussion der relevanten Sekundärliteratur.

11 Vgl. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Petr zwar eher vage zu sein scheint,[12] deren Entstehung aber ebenfalls mit guten Gründen in Ägypten angesetzt wird.[13]

1 Die Offenbarung des Petrus und das Profil des frühesten erreichbaren Christentums in Alexandria

In seiner kleinen, aber feinen Monographie über die Anfänge des Christentums in Alexandria beschreibt Alfons Fürst die Entstehung des alexandrinischen Christentums als einer Intellektuellen-Religion und geht dabei zunächst von wichtigen Persönlichkeiten aus, die den Weg bis hin zu einigen der Großen wie Clemens oder Origenes markieren bzw. markiert haben dürften.[14] Mit meiner These, die griechische Offenbarung des Petrus in Alexandria zu verorten, setze ich die greifbaren Ursprünge des alexandrinischen Christentums nicht nur (etwa) eine Generation früher als Fürst an, kann dafür jedoch keine historische Persönlichkeit, aber einen—wenn auch nur schlecht überlieferten[15]—Text, die Offenbarung des Petrus, anbieten. Die Gründe dafür, die Offenbarung des Petrus in das Alexandrien des frühen 2. Jahrhunderts einzuordnen, liegen auf mehreren Ebenen: Die These der Entstehung in Alexandria wird durch den Ausschluss anderer Orte, aufgrund des religionsgeschichtlichen Charakters des Textes und schließlich—dies ist sicherlich das schwächste Argument—aufgrund von Indizien früher Rezeption der Schrift wahrscheinlich gemacht.

12 Hierzu vgl. die Diskussion von Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 165–181.

13 Dies gilt vor allem dann, wenn der Text wie im Folgenden als basilidianisch eingeordnet wird, reichte die Bewegung der Basilidianer doch wohl nicht über Ägypten hinaus.

14 Alfons Fürst, *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion: die Anfänge des Christentums in Alexandria*, SBS 213 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2007), 16–69, diskutiert Hinweise zu Basilides (und Isidor), Karpokrates, Valentinus, Herakleon, Athenagoras, Pantainos, Clemens, Heraklas, Origenes und Ambrosios, geht danach aber durchaus auf weitere Texte ein, deren Entstehung in Ägypten nicht eindeutig ist. Vgl. darüber hinaus auch die etwas andere Schwerpunkte setzenden Übersichten bei Attila Jakab, „Le gnosticisme Alexandrin aux premiers temps du Christianisme," in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian, and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuizen*, hg. von A. Hilhorst und Geurt H. van Kooten, AGJU 59 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 365–80; Ibid.; Bernard Pouderon, „'Jewish,' 'Christian,' and 'Gnostic' Groups in Alexandria during the 2nd Century: Between Approval and Expulsion," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, hg. von Luca Arcari, STAC 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017).

15 Zur griechischen Überlieferung vgl. Thomas J. Kraus und Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), 101–30.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Natürlich ist bereits aufgrund der hoch problematischen Überlieferung des Textes klar, dass letzte Sicherheit momentan nicht erreichbar ist. Doch selbst wenn die Offenbarung des Petrus nicht in Ägypten entstanden sein sollte, spielte sie dort bereits früh eine Rolle:

(1) Der Text zitiert alttestamentliche Schriften, soweit dies aufgrund der heutigen Überlieferungslage noch festzustellen ist, in der Form der LXX.[16] Während dies natürlich an vielen Orten denkbar ist, erscheint signifikanter, dass er in Kapitel 8 die mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit in Alexandria entstandene, im frühen Christentum jedoch lange Zeit nur wenig bearbeitete Sapientia Salomonis (Sap 5) verarbeitet.[17] Aus dem frühen Christentum ist mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit das Matthäusevangelium verarbeitet,[18] gleichzeitig treten paulinische und johanneische Einflüsse so stark zurück, dass davon auszugehen ist, dass der Text kaum in einem der Einflusszentren des Paulus oder der johanneischen Gemeinde entstanden sein dürfte.[19]

(2) Der Text scheint in einem Milieu entstanden, in dem den Kategorien „jüdisch", „christlich", „Anhänger griechisch-römischer Kulte"[20] noch nicht die Rolle zukommt, die sie für unser heutiges Empfinden spielen.[21] So beschreibt er (als einziger frühchristlicher Text neben 2 Petr) das Ende der Welt mit Hilfe des (hier jedoch die ganze Welt betreffenden) in antiker Mythologie zunächst in Ägypten spielenden, aber auch in jüdischen Schriften womöglich Ägyptens

16 Dies zeigt J. van Ruiten, „The Old Testament Quotations in the *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 158–73.

17 Dies zeigt m.E. überzeugend J.-M. Rosenstiehl, „Tartarouchos—Temelouchos," in *Deuxième journée d'études coptes. Strasbourg 25 mai 1984*, hg. von J.-M. Rosenstiehl, Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 3 (Leuven; Paris: Peeters, 1986), 50–51.

18 Dies zeigt für die Rahmenteile Richard J. Bauckham, „The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter," *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87.

19 Wie wenig paulinisch z.B. die im Text verarbeitete Auferstehungsvorstellung ist, habe ich in Tobias Nicklas, „Auferstehung zu Tod und Strafe: Unpaulinische Auferstehungsvorstellungen im frühen Christentum," in *"If Christ has not been raised …": Studies on the Reception of the Resurrection Stories and the Belief in the Resurrection in the Early Church*, hg. von Joseph Verheyden, Andreas Merkt, und Tobias Nicklas, NTOA 115 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 113–15, gezeigt. Die Prophezeiung des Todes Petri in OffbPetr 14,4 wiederum scheint von Joh 21,18 unabhängig. Zu dieser Passage im Detail Tobias Nicklas, „'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times," in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, hg. von Jonathan Knight und Kevin P. Sullivan, LNTS 522 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015), 183–200. Der Text zeigt zudem auch keinen antipaulinischen Charakter.

20 Ich versuche den spätantiken, aus christlicher Sicht formulierten Begriff „pagan" zu vermeiden.

21 Dies ist die entscheidende These von Nicklas, „Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(vgl. Sib. Or. 5,206–13) aufgegriffenen Motivs vom Weltenbrand.[22] Das Jenseits wird nicht nur mit dem Bild des Reiches Christi, sondern—wenigstens für die Geretteten „zweiter Kategorie"—mit den Begriffen „Acherusischer See" und „Elysisches Feld" (OffbPetr 14,1) beschrieben,[23] während gleichzeitig die Namen der im Text begegnenden Engel neben jüdischen auch die Einflüsse griechisch-römischer Mythologie verraten—so lesen wir nicht nur von Uriel (OffbPetr 4,9; 6,7; 12,5) und Ezrael (OffbPetr 13,3), sondern von Temelouchos (Zitat bei Clemens v.A., Ekl. 48–49) und Tartarouchos (OffbPetr 13,5).[24] Die einen breiten Raum einnehmenden Beschreibungen „höllischer" Orte schließlich dürften sich, wie J.N. Bremmer gezeigt hat, (wenigstens in Teilen) aufgrund des Einflusses orphischer Literaturen erklären.[25]

(3) Auch wenn sich aus der frühen Rezeptionsgeschichte einer Schrift kein direktes Argument über ihre Herkunft ergibt, kann diese zumindest stützend in die Argumentation eingebracht[26] und gleichzeitig erwiesen werden, wo die Schrift (wenigstens nach ihrer Entstehung) eine Rolle spielte. Gegen A. Jakab, der zu der These kommt, dass die Petrusapokalypse im 2. Jahrhundert alleine in Rom und Syrien bekannt war,[27] ist über das auf Rom weisende Muratorische

22 Zum Hintergrund und der Entwicklung dieser zumindest im Ursprung an Ägypten gebundenen Vorstellung vgl. Knut Usener, „Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur," in *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, hg. von Luke Neubert und Michael Tilly, BTS 137 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013), 149–81.

23 Zur Verwendung und dem möglichen (eventuell über jüdische Schriften vermittelten Hintergrund) dieser Orte vgl. Thomas J. Kraus, „Acherusia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext," *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

24 Hierzu weiterführend Rosenstiehl, „Tartarouchos—Temelouchos."

25 Hierzu z.B. Jan N. Bremmer, „The Apocalypse of Peter: Greek or Jewish?," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 10–14; Jan N. Bremmer, „Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, hg. von Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 305–22, welcher, zurückgreifend auf die klassische Studie von Albrecht Dieterich, *Nekyia. Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1893), die Bedeutung griechischer Religion für die Erklärung jüdischer und christlicher Jenseitsreisen hervorhebt und sich damit gegen den Trend wendet, die Texte alleine im Rahmen frühjüdischer Kontexte zu interpretieren.

26 Hierzu sehr ähnlich Nicklas, „Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria."

27 Vgl. Attila Jakab, „The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, Studies in Early

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Fragment hinaus darauf zu verweisen, dass weder die Epistula Apostolorum (mit vier Parallelen zur Offenbarung des Petrus) noch das zweite der Sibyllinischen Orakel eindeutig auf Syrien, sondern durchaus auch auf Ägypten weisen. Die *Eklogen* des Clemens von Alexandrien wiederum, in denen die Offenbarung des Petrus mehrfach zitiert wird, gehen wohl auf das frühe dritte Jahrhundert zurück, die Zitate der Offenbarung des Petrus in diesem Text wiederum dürften jedoch einem ansonsten verlorenen älteren Psalmenkommentar entstammen, den Clemens in den Kapiteln 41–65 zitiert;[28] hinzu kommt der verlorene, jedoch bei Eusebius, h.e. 6,13,12 erwähnte Kommentar des Clemens zur Offenbarung des Petrus in seinen *Hypotyposen.* Will man zudem 2 Petr nach Alexandrien einordnen—Wolfgang Grünstäudls Argumentation ist hier unabhängig von der Verortung der Offenbarung des Petrus[29]—, dazu an spätere Rezeptionen in der (wenigstens im Kern ägyptischen) Apokalypse des Paulus und der ebenfalls ägyptischen Apokalypse des Elija[30] denken, dann lässt sich damit zwar die Entstehung des Textes in Alexandria nicht erweisen, doch in jedem Falle wahrscheinlich machen, dass diese Schrift früh eine bedeutende Rolle innerhalb eines ägyptisch-alexandrinischen „Petrus-Diskurses" gespielt haben dürfte.

Ein solcher Text scheint kaum, anders als dies R.J. Bauckham vertritt, im Zusammenhang mit dem Bar-Kochba-Krieg im Palästina des 2. Jahrhunderts entstanden;[31] wenig wahrscheinlich scheinen auch die Zentren paulinischer oder johanneischer Aktivität in Syrien, Kleinasien oder Achaja.[32] Rom schließlich dürfte aufgrund der in OffbPetr 14,4 erkennbaren östlichen Perspektive

---

Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 176, der weitgehend das Material bei Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars press, 1988), 398–412 übernimmt.

28 Dies zeigt überzeugend Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 268–281.

29 Vgl. Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 287–296, der hier neben die frühe Rezeption auch inhaltliche Verbindungen zum Denken der Schule des Pantainos und des Clemens von Alexandrien aufweist; deutlich zurückhaltender Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/2 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015), 189.

30 Hierzu ausführlich David Frankfurter, *Elijah in Upper Egypt: The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity*, Studies in Antiquity and Christianity (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

31 Besonders wichtig Richard J. Bauckham, „The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160–258.

32 In einer Reihe von Publikationen wurde Bauckhams These durch E. Norelli aufgegriffen, welcher jedoch für Syrien als Entstehungsort plädiert. Vgl. Enrico Norelli, „L'adversaire eschatologique dans l'Apocalypse de Pierre," in *Les forces du bien et du mal dans les premiers siècles de l'église*, hg. von Yves-Marie Blanchard, Bernard Pouderon, und Maddalena Scopello, Théologie historique 118 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2011), 291–317.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

des Textes auszuschließen sein.[33] Sollte der Text stattdessen im Alexandria des frühen 2. Jahrhunderts—trotz der Endzeitszene der ersten Kapitel nicht unbedingt an den dramatischen jüdischen Diasporaaufstand zur Zeit des Trajan gebunden[34]—entstanden sein, lässt sich hinter ihm der Umriss eines Christentums erkennen, in dem, obwohl das Matthäusevangelium in der Offenbarung des Petrus verarbeitet wird, Kreuz und Auferstehung Jesu hinter der Vorstellung einer Verwandlung, Himmelfahrt und schließlich endzeitlichen himmlischen Krönung zurücktreten.[35] Dass der Text die Passion Jesu nicht vollkommen ausspart, sondern voraussetzt, ist immerhin an der Rede davon, dass das Kreuz bei der Parusie Christi (OffbPetr 1,6) eine Rolle spielt, wie auch vielleicht im Kelchwort an Petrus erkennbar (OffbPetr 14,4). Trotzdem zeigen sich keine Spuren davon, dass das Kreuz Jesu als heilsrelevant angesehen wird. Dieses Christentum lebt in Erwartung der Endereignisse, die als Parusie Christi, als „letzter Tag" (OffbPetr 3,1.7), „Tag der Vergeltung" (OffbPetr 4,7), aber auch als „Tag Gottes" (OffbPetr 4,1), an dem alle Toten zum Gericht hin auferstehen und die Welt im Feuer zerstört werden wird, beschrieben werden können. Dass diese Endereignisse in nicht allzu ferner Zukunft zu erwarten sind, ergibt sich eventuell weniger aus den ersten beiden Kapiteln mit ihrer Endzeitrede, sondern vielleicht noch eher aus der Prophezeiung, dass Petrus in Rom das Martyrium erleiden werde (OffbPetr 14,4), womit die Ereignisse der Endzeit in eine neue Stufe eintreten würden.[36] So sehr dieses Christentum die Verehrung von Götzen verurteilt (OffbPetr 6,7; 10,2.5), so sehr ist es—eventuell durch die Vermittlung über jüdische Schriften—in der Lage, Aspekte griechisch-römischer Mythologie aufzunehmen und zu verarbeiten: Ich denke hier an bereits genannte Aspekte wie den Weltenbrand, die Vorstellung von

33 Der Text, erhalten in dem griechischen Fragment P.Vindob.G 39756, lautet: „Und geh in die Stadt, die herrscht über den Westen…".

34 Ich habe noch in Nicklas, „Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," diese Verbindung stark gemacht, sehe sie inzwischen aber als nicht notwendig an.

35 Zur Christologie der Offenbarung des Petrus vgl. Tobias Nicklas, „El hijo de Dios regio: sovre la cristología del Apocalipsis del Pedro," in *Filiación. Cultura pagana, religion de Israel, orígenes del cristianismo V*, hg. von Patricio de Navascués Benlloch, Manuel José Crespo Losada, und Andrés Sáez Gutiérrez (Madrid: Trotta, 2014), 275–88; spannende Gedanken zur politisch-zeitgeschichtlichen Einordnung des Christusbildes der Offenbarung des Petrus bietet M. Sommer, „Reading the Apocalypse of Peter Politically: The Political Portrayal of Trahan and the Vision of Christ," in *Reading the Political in Jewish and Christian Texts*, hg. von J. Snyder und K. Zamfir, Biblical Tools and Studies (Leuven: Peeters, im Druck).

36 Hierzu im Detail Nicklas, „'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Acherusischem See und Elysischem Feld, aber auch die Zeichnung der höllischen Orte. In einer Situation, die offenbar als bedrängt empfunden wird, erwarten diese Christen, bei der Parusie Anteil am himmlischen Reich Christi zu erhalten (OffbPetr 14,2). Zudem haben sie Teil an der endzeitlichen Herrschaft des königlichen Gottessohnes, der ihnen die Möglichkeit gewährt, für die Toten, die sie sich aus der ewigen Verdammung heraus erbitten, so etwas wie eine Rettung „zweiter Kategorie"—nach dem Bad im Acherusischen See ein Aufenthalt im Elysischen Feld—zu erringen.[37] Gleichzeitig treten paulinische Gedanken zurück: Die Auferstehung der Toten ist in keiner Weise an die Auferweckung des gekreuzigten Jesus von Nazaret gebunden, sondern vielmehr in Termini beschrieben, die an Ezechiel 37 und das zweite Makkabäerbuch erinnern.[38] Das Zorngericht Gottes ist in erster Linie ein Vergeltungsgericht nach den Taten des Menschen; Ideen wie die einer Freiheit in Christus fehlen genauso wie ein Ringen um die Tora. Petrus wird, wohl in Verarbeitung von Mt 16–17, zum entscheidenden Bindeglied zu Christus, zum Visionär und Offenbarungsträger, dem von Jesus alles Notwendige gezeigt wurde (OffbPetr 14,3) und der nun den „Kelch" trinken soll, der ihm verheißen ist (OffbPetr 14,4).[39] Die einzige Parallele zum Johannesevangelium schließlich besteht in der Prophezeiung des Todes Petri—der Text der Offenbarung des Petrus weist jedoch keinerlei Zeichen einer Abhängigkeit vom Joh 21,18 auf. Die große Nähe des so wenigstens in Konturen beschreibbaren Christentums zu jüdischem Denken, die sich über die Auferstehungsszene hinaus auch in der (wahrscheinlichen) Verarbeitung von Diasporatexten wie den Sibyllinischen Orakeln, der Weisheit Salomos, der Septuaginta-Version von Ez 37, der strikten Ablehnung jeglicher Götzenverehrung und der Bedeutung von Mose und Elija für die Transfiguration und Himmelfahrt zeigt, kann bedeuten, dass dieses Christentum seine Ursprünge in der bedeutsamen und für verschiedenste Denkrichtungen offenen jüdischen Diasporagemeinde Alexandrias gehabt haben mag. Gleichzeitig zeigt sich in der Hoffnung auf Rettung der Völker

37 Hierzu weiterführend Tobias Nicklas, „Petrusoffenbarung, Christusoffenbarung und ihre Funktion: Autoritätskonstruktion in der Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Author Concepts and Strategies of Authorization in Early Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature*, hg. von Jörg Frey, Franz Tóth, und Michael Jost, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck).

38 Richard J. Bauckham, „A Quotation from 4Q Second Ezekiel in the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 259–68, erkennt zu Recht, dass das Zitat von Ez 37 in OffbPetr 4,8 eine (auch in Qumran bezeugte) Stufe des Verständnisses von Ez 37 als Zeugnis endzeitlicher Auferstehung voraussetzt.

39 Zur Konstruktion petrinischer Autorität in der Offenbarung des Petrus vgl. Nicklas, „Petrusoffenbarung, Christusoffenbarung und ihre Funktion: Autoritätskonstruktion in der Offenbarung des Petrus."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(OffbPetr 14,2) eine Offenheit des Textes auch in diese Richtung hin. Dass ein solches Christentum *nach* der Katastrophe des Diaspora-Krieges in der Zeit Trajans (115–117 n.Chr.) sich stärker als bisher vom Judentum abgrenzen musste, dürfte klar sein. Ist dies der Grund dafür, dass wir (außer der ja nur schlecht überlieferten Offenbarung des Petrus) von ihm keine klaren Zeugnisse haben?

2 Der zweite Petrusbrief, die Verzögerung der Parusie und das Problem paulinischen Denkens

Will man nun den zweiten Petrusbrief als eine ein bis zwei Generationen nach der Offenbarung des Petrus vielleicht ebenfalls in Alexandrien entstandene Reaktion auf Änderungen deuten, die sich seit der Entstehung der Offenbarung des Petrus ergeben haben, dann lässt sich eine Reihe von Aspekten dieses Briefes m.E. besser als bisher verstehen: Die Figur des Petrus, „ungewöhnlich feierlich“[40] als „Symeon Petrus, Knecht und Apostel Jesu Christi“ (2 Petr 1,1) eingeführt, ist weiterhin so sehr Bezugspunkt, dass „Petrus“ nicht einfach irgendeine konkrete Ekklesia an einem bestimmten Ort oder bestehend aus den Bewohnern eines bestimmten Orts anspricht, sondern sich an „alle“ richtet, die „den gleichen kostbaren Glauben erlangt haben wie wir“ (2 Petr 1,1). Was in der Offenbarung des Petrus als ganz natürlich vorausgesetzt ist—die besondere Ehrenstellung des Petrus als entscheidender Mittlerfigur—, wird in 2 Petr verteidigt und ausgebaut. Dies geschieht durch zwei einander korrespondierende Techniken: einerseits durch die „Inszenierung“ der Autorität des Petrus, andererseits durch die Integration neuer, nun zu verarbeitender Einflüsse in den entstehenden Brief.[41] Der Petrus des 2 Petr stellt sich in archaischer Weise als „Symeon Petrus“ vor, bezeichnet sich als „Knecht und Apostel Christi“ (2 Petr 1,1), er ist derjenige, dessen Aufgabe darin besteht, an die Ursprünge dessen, was als „Wahrheit“ verstanden ist, auch über die apostolische Generation hinaus zu „erinnern“ (2 Petr 1,12–13.15): Dies wiederum tut er an der Schwelle von Leben zu Tod (2 Petr 1,14–15), sein Text ist deswegen nicht einfach Brief, sondern „Testament“ eines Vertrauten Jesu Christi, dessen Tod durch Christus selbst offenbart ist (2 Petr 1,15). Wenn 2 Petr 1,12–21 nun nicht die Verklärungsszenen der Synoptiker voraussetzt, sondern die der Offenbarung

40 Frey, *Brief*, 209.

41 Hierzu auch Wolfgang Grünstäudl, „Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament. Zur Konstruktion apostolischer Autorität in OffbPetr und 2 Petr,“ in *Between Canonical and Apocryphal Texts: Processes of Rewriting, Reception and Interpretation in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, hg. von Claire Clivaz, Jörg Frey, und Tobias Nicklas, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

des Petrus, dann wird zudem die Logik der Argumentation deutlich, verbindet doch die Offenbarung des Petrus Verklärung und Verherrlichung Jesu mit seiner Himmelfahrt (OffbPetr 17,3): Wenn Petrus nun aber als Zeuge einer Verklärung spricht, die in die Himmelfahrt Jesu mündet, dann ist gleichzeitig auch denen, die offenbar ein Kommen Jesu *vom Himmel her* leugnen, ein entscheidendes Argument entzogen. Vor diesem Hintergrund gebärdet sich der Petrus des 2 Petr als Autorität, deren Lehre unhinterfragbar ist, die es nicht nötig hat, gegnerischen Meinungen mehr als Polemik entgegen zu setzen und von deren Gunst und Missgunst die Beurteilung neuer Strömungen abhängt. Dabei zeigt sich zunächst, dass, während der Judasbrief Bausteine für die Polemik gegen die Gegner bietet, viele Gedanken der Offenbarung des Petrus positiv aufgenommen sind:[42] Während dies noch nicht unbedingt für die Rede von der Reinigung von früheren Sünden (2 Petr 1,9) gelten muss, lassen sich (u.a.) die soteriologische Vorstellung vom Eintreten in das ewige Reich Jesu Christi (2 Petr 1,11; OffbPetr 14,2), die Erinnerung an den zu erwartenden Tod Petri (2 Petr 1,14; OffbPetr 14,4), die Anspielung auf die Verklärung Jesu (2 Petr 1,17–18; OffbPetr 17), eventuell die Aufnahme von endzeitlichen Vorstellungen über Lügenpropheten und falschen Lehrern (2 Petr 2,1–3; OffbPetr 2), die Lehre vom Weltenbrand (2 Petr 2,10–12; OffbPetr 5) und sehr überraschend, aber m.E. besonders signifikant, die Möglichkeit, den „Tag des Herrn" als „Tag Gottes" zu bezeichnen (2 Petr 2,12; OffbPetr 4,1) so erklären. Entscheidendes vom „bisherigen Bestand" bzw. der „bisherigen Matrix" des Denkens soll also bewahrt und, gebunden an die Figur des Petrus, in eine neue Zeit hinein gerettet werden. Diese „neue Zeit" jedoch ist von einer ganzen Reihe von Herausforderungen geprägt, deren geringste darin zu bestehen scheint, dass (wohl mit 1 Petr) ein weiteres petrinisches Schreiben in Briefform aufgetaucht ist, welches in 2 Petr 3,1 ganz einfach unter die Autorität des Absenders „Petrus" integriert wird.[43] Wie wenig dieser Text offenbar als Problem verstanden wurde, zeigt sich darin, dass auf ihn im Grunde nicht wirklich Bezug genommen werden muss: 2 Petr zeigt weder eine echte inhaltliche noch eine—z.B. dem Modell des Zueinanders von 2 Thess zu 1 Thess vergleichbare[44]—formale Orientierung

42 Zur Frage, wie 2 Petr die Offenbarung des Petrus weiterführt, vgl. ausführlicher Grünstäudl, „Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament."

43 Zur Diskussion der Frage, ob in 2 Petr 3,1 wirklich der 1. Petrusbrief angesprochen ist, vgl. die Übersicht bei Anton Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*, EKK 22 (Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994), 211–12.

44 Im Grunde lässt sich 2 Thess nur erklären, wenn man einen Autor voraussetzt, der den 1 Thess nahezu auswendig kannte und/oder ihn auf seinem Schreibtisch liegen hatte. Dies hat im Grunde schon William Wrede, *Die Echtheit des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefs*,

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

an 1 Petr.[45] Vielleicht kommt der Anspruch des 1 Petr in einem als „Babylon" chiffrierten Rom (1 Petr 5,13) enstanden zu sein,[46] gar dem 2 Petr entgegen, der ja—will die Todesprophezeiung aus OffbPetr 14,4 ernst genommen werden—ebenfalls, ohne dies explizieren zu müssen, von seinen Lesern erwarten kann, als römisches Schreiben gelesen zu werden.

Schwerer tut sich 2 Petr schon mit dem nun offenbar nicht mehr wegzudiskutierenden, offenbar wachsenden Einfluss paulinischen Denkens; immerhin setzt 2 Petr 3,16 nun schon eine Sammlung paulinischer Briefe voraus. Obwohl 2 Petr nun wenigstens ansatzweise formal an paulinische Apostelbriefe anschließt, wie v.a. die Salutatio mit Gnadenformel in 2 Petr 1,2 nahe legt, lässt sich eine positive Aufnahme und Verarbeitung paulinischen Denkens (wie sie etwa für 1 Petr immer wieder diskutiert wird), in 2 Petr kaum erkennen. Zwar geht 2 Petr nicht den Weg etwa der Pseudoklementinen, scharfe Polemik gegen Paulus zu äußern. Dieser Weg scheint ihm verschlossen, Paulus muss integriert werden—doch unterhalb der Autorität des Petrus. So ist 2 Petr 3,15–16 als durchaus ambivalentes Lob des Paulus zu lesen:[47] Paulus ist „geliebter Bruder" (wie auch alle anderen Angesprochenen: 2 Petr 3,1), jedoch nicht Apostel, ihm wurde „Weisheit geschenkt"—und doch werden seine Briefe auf den Gedanken reduziert, dass es nötig ist, „geduldig" zu sein. Besonders wichtig ist jedoch 2 Petr 3,16a, eine Passage, deren Übersetzung umstritten ist. Ich verstehe das hier verwendete, äußerst seltene δυσνόητος, welches meist als „schwer zu verstehen" wiedergegeben wird, aufgrund all der anderen Verwendungen des Wortes als „nur mit Hilfe einer Erklärung verstehbar": Die Briefe des Paulus dürfen also gelesen werden, aber nur, solange sie in den Horizont „korrekter Auslegung"—natürlich unter petrinischer Autorität—gestellt werden. Dass der Petrus des 2 Petr sich auch in anderen Kontexten als entscheidender Hermeneut autoritativer Schriften versteht, zeigt sich auch gegenüber den Schriften Israels, die offenbar in erster Linie als „prophetisch" verstanden werden (2 Petr 1,20–21; 3,2), laut 2 Petr 1,20 niemals eigenmächtig ausgelegt werden dürfen, deren angemessene typologische Interpretation „Petrus" jedoch

TU 9.2 (Leipzig: Akademie, 1903) gezeigt. Für weitere Details vgl. die Einleitung in Tobias Nicklas, *Der zweite Thessalonicherbrief*, KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018).

45 Vielleicht am ehesten ist noch ein Bezug zwischen 2 Petr 3,18 und 1 Petr 4,11 zu sehen.

46 Zur Diskussion, wie weit aus diesem Hinweis tatsächlich zu schließen ist, ob 1 Petr in Rom entstanden ist, vgl. z.B. Horn, „Die Petrus-Schule in Rom: Forschungsgeschichtliche Notizen zur Abfassungssituation des 1. Petrusbriefs," 5–13.

47 Zur Diskussion dieser Passage vgl. Tobias Nicklas, „'Der geliebte Bruder': Zur Paulusrezeption im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Herzstück oder Appendix? Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, hg. von Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, und Uta Poplutz, WUNT 397 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 133–50.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

ohne Zögern (z.B. die typologischen Auslegungen in 2 Petr 2,4–10) für sich in Anspruch nimmt. Mit dieser Mischung aus Aufbau der eigenen Autorität und Integration neuer Strömungen unter den eigenen Anspruch kann 2 Petr dann auch davon ausgehen, dass seine Polemik „ankommt".

Vielleicht ist damit jedoch noch nicht alles gesagt: Auch wenn wir heute (mit Recht) dazu neigen, nur mit größter Zurückhaltung von „Gnosis" als einer mehr oder minder einheitlichen, klar definierbaren Strömung innerhalb der Vielfalt frühchristlicher Gruppierungen zu sprechen,[48] ist nicht zu übersehen, mit welch positiver Betonung 2 Petr von „Erkenntnis" und „erkennen" die Rede ist (γνῶσις: 2 Petr 1,5–6; 3,18; vgl. auch 1,2–3.8; 2,20: ἐπίγνωσις; γινώσκω: 2 Petr 1,20; 3,3; vgl. auch 2,21: ἐπιγινώσκω [2x]; 2 Petr 1,16: γνωρίζω; 2 Petr 3,17: προγινώσκω). Die reine Zahl der Vorkommen an sich wäre noch nicht entscheidend: Interessant jedoch ist, dass etwa 2 Petr 1,5–6 die „Gnosis" als eine Schlüsseleigenschaft im Tugendkatalog von 1,5–8 begreift, der als Ziel der Entwicklung des Christen die zunehmende „Erkenntnis unseres Herrn Jesus Christus" versteht (vgl. aber auch 2 Petr 2,21!). Gleichzeitig bildet die Rede von der „Erkenntnis Gottes und des Herrn Jesus Christus" (2 Petr 1,2) eine Inklusion mit der Rede von der „Erkenntnis unseres Herrn und Retters Jesus Christus" (2 Petr 3,18). Gotteserkenntnis und, damit verbunden, vielleicht noch mehr Christuserkenntnis sind somit über die Offenbarung des Petrus hinaus zu positiv besetzten Schlüsselthemen des 2 Petr geworden.[49] Lässt sich dies eventuell wenigstens vorsichtig mit dem ab dem frühen 2. Jahrhundert erkennbaren Einfluss gnostischer Lehrer in Alexandria in Bezug setzen? Dabei geht es mir nicht darum, 2 Petr als gegen „Gnostiker" polemisierend zu verstehen,[50] vielleicht will der Text die Rede von der „Erkenntnis Christi" ja in erster Linie positiv

48 Hierzu werden immer wieder die kritischen Argumente bei Michael A Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996) und Karen L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003) angeführt. Man spricht nun meist (wie auch hier) von Gnosis in Anführungszeichen. Trotz größerer Sensibilität als in früherer Zeit scheint mir das Problem jedoch noch nicht wirklich gelöst zu sein.

49 Zur Bedeutung auch Thomas J. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 354.

50 Die These, 2 Petr sei gegen „gnostische" Gegner gerichtet, wird heute in dieser Einfachheit kaum mehr vertreten. Eine Ausnahme bildet Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006), 22. Zur älteren Forschung vgl. u.a. Tobias Nicklas, „Judasbrief und Zweiter Petrusbrief," in *Der „Kritisch-Exegetische Kommentar" in seiner Geschichte. H.A.W. Meyers KEK von seiner Gründung 1829 bis heute*, hg. von Eve-Marie Becker, Friedrich W. Horn und Dietrich-Alex Koch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 386–403.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

besetzen und baut von daher auch womöglich eine Brücke in das Denken des Clemens von Alexandria.[51]

3 „Gnostische" Stimmen

Wenn wir 2 Petr tatsächlich erst im Alexandria der Mitte des 2. Jahrhunderts unserer Zeitrechnung ansetzen wollen, dann könnte, selbst wenn man 2 Petr keine „Gnostikerpolemik" unterstellen möchte, der Text recht konkret als Teil auch eines Diskurses um die Frage nach der rechten „Erkenntnis Christi" gelesen werden. Aus den Stromateis des Clemens von Alexandrien (str. 7,106,4–107,1) und durch Irenäus von Lyon (haer. 1,24,1) erfahren wir von der Gründung der Schule des Basilides in Alexandria zur Zeit Hadrians.[52] Unklar bleibt, wie sehr wir der genauen Datierung durch Eusebius von Caesarea (h.e. 6,7,3; chron. Abr. 2148), welcher Basilides zudem als „Häresiarchen" beschreibt, von dem die Gnostiker abstammten, in das sechzehnte Jahr der Regierung Hadrians (132 n.Chr.) trauen dürfen.[53] Deutlich vager sind Zeugnisse, die Karpokrates und seinen Sohn Epiphanes im Alexandrien der ersten Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts ansetzen wollen, auch die erst bei Epiphanius von Salamis (pan. 31,2,2–3) überlieferte Nachricht von einer Ausbildung des Valentinus in Alexandria (vor seiner Ankunft in Rom um 140 n.Chr.) ist mit Vorsicht zu genießen.[54] So wenig wir nun über die frühe Tätigkeit des Basilides wissen und so fragmentarisch unser Kenntnis über seine Lehre ist, so sehr ist deutlich, dass „gnostische" Einflüsse in Alexandria bereits in sehr früher Zeit erkennbar

51 Vgl. die Überlegungen von Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 250–254.

52 Winrich A. Löhr, „Christliche ‚Gnostiker' in Alexandria im zweiten Jahrhundert," in *Alexandria*, hg. von Tobias Georges, Felix Albrecht, und Reinhard Feldmeier, COMES 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 418–19, ist auch hier zurückhaltend mit dem Begriff „Schulbetrieb."

53 Die umfangreichste Auseinandersetzung mit Basilides bietet Winrich A. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule. Eine Studie zur Theologie- und Kirchengeschichte des zweiten Jahrhunderts*, WUNT 83 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996). Eine Zusammenfassung der hier genannten Quellen bietet auch knapp Fürst, *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion*, 20–21. Die lateinische Fassung der Chroniken ist indirekt über Hieronymus erhalten; der armenische Text der Fragmente der Chroniken des Eusebius (vgl. A. Schoene, *Eusebii Chronicorum canonum qui supersunt* [Dublin; Zürich: Weidmann, 1967]) spricht vom 17. Jahr der Regierung Hadrians.

54 Hierzu auch Fürst, *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion*, 24–28; Ismo Dunderberg, „The School of Valentinus," in *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics"*, hg. von Antti Marjanen und Petri Luomanen, VCSup 76 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 72, ist hier etwas zuversichtlicher: „Valentinus most likely originally came from Egypt."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

sind.[55] Gleichzeitig wird selbst bei einem üblicherweise als „proto-orthodox" eingeordneten Autor wie Clemens (im Gegensatz zum späteren Origenes)[56] der Begriff „Gnosis" nicht nur positiv verarbeitet, sondern zu einem zentralen Theologoumenon.[57] Wolfgang Grünstäudl schreibt:

> Für Clemens ist γνῶσις *der* zentrale Begriff seiner Theologie. Er schreibt die strom., um γνῶσις zu vermitteln und entwirft den „wahren Gnostiker" als Idealbild des Christen. Doch nicht jeder ist für diese γνῶσις disponiert: So wie der Esel mit der Laute nichts anfangen kann und das Schwein den Schlamm dem klaren Wasser vorzieht, so sind manche für die Erkenntnis unempfänglich. Wer γνῶσις vermittelt, dies eine der vornehmsten Aufgaben des „wahren Gnostikers", der übernimmt eine besondere Verantwortung.[58]

Da Clemens zwar die Offenbarung des Petrus zitiert, den 2 Petr aber nicht zu kennen scheint, ihn zumindest nicht benutzt,[59] ist nun kaum davon auszugehen, dass 2 Petr die Brücke zu Clemens' Verständnis der Gnosis bildet. Die beiden verbindet jedoch ein gemeinsames Denken, präziser, das gemeinsame Anliegen, Gnosis und Pistis, Erkenntnis und aktiv gelebten Glauben positiv miteinander zu verknüpfen.[60] Dieses Anliegen könnte durchaus wiederum im Diskurse mit weiteren Petrus-Schriften stehen: Jörg Freys Beitrag erwähnt in diesem Zusammenhang das nur fragmentarisch erhaltene Kerygma Petri, dessen Herkunft aus Alexandria immer wieder vermutet wurde, aber nicht bewiesen werden kann, das aber immerhin—wie die Rezeption des Textes bei

55 Vgl. auch die Übersicht bei P.-H. Poirier, „Basilide, Carpocrate, Valentin et la première gnose," in *Le Livre des Égyptes*, hg. von F. Quentin (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2015), 345–54.

56 So Annewies van den Hoek, „Papyrus Berolinensis 20915 in the Context of Other Early Christian Writings from Egypt," in *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, hg. von Lorenzo Perrone, BETL 164 (Leuven: Leuven University Press; Peeters, 2003), 83: „The concept of gnosis can almost be considered the hallmark of Clement's theology. The usage of the term also contrasts with Origen who seems to avoid it."

57 Allerdings zeigt sich gerade am Beispiel des Clemens von Alexandrien, wie wenig aussagekräftig auch das Label „proto-orthodox" für die Zeit vor Konstantin ist.

58 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 250.

59 Hierzu Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 236–286, der schreibt: „Eine Kenntnis des 2 Petr durch Clemens Alexandrinus lässt sich nicht wahrscheinlich machen. Im umfangreichen Werk des Alexandriners—auch im erhaltenen Kommentar zu 1 Petr—sind *weder eindeutige Zitate von, noch Anspielungen auf 2 Petr* zu identifizieren. Auch vermögen es die unscharfen und nicht übereinstimmenden Angaben zum Inhalt der hyp. bei Eusebius und Photius nicht, die These, Clemens habe in den hyp. 2 Petr kommentiert, gegen den Textbefund in den adumbr. plausibel zu begründen."

60 Vgl. wiederum Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 250–253.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Clemens von Alexandria und Origenes zeigt—in Alexandrien eine Rolle gespielt haben muss. Da sich Datierung und Verortung dieses nur äußerst fragmentarisch in Zitaten überlieferten Textes nur sehr schwer gestalten,[61] ist er—gerade als Fragment—kaum in ein klares „genealogisches" Abhängigkeitsverhältnis zum bisher Gesagten zu setzen. Die Kombination aus einem sich an ein ganz offenbar völkerchristliches Publikum wendenden Petrus des Kerygma, aus Polemik gegen die Verehrung von Engeln, der Bedeutung von „Erkenntnis" (gerade im Zusammenhang mit „Frömmigkeit" und rechter Gottesverehrung)[62] und dem Ringen um Hermeneutik der Schrift, die Jörg Frey herausstellt, lassen das Kerygma mit einiger Wahrscheinlichkeit als eine (leider in seinen größten Teilen verlorene) Stimme im petrinischen Diskurs verstehen.[63]

Wichtiger scheint mir jedoch ein noch jenseits der Entstehung des 2 Petr einzuordnender, als „Apokalypse" (in einem weiten Sinne) vielleicht wenigstens vage auch auf die Offenbarung des Petrus zurückgreifender Text, die koptische Petrusapokalypse aus Nag Hammadi (NHC VII,3). Allerdings lässt sich über das konkrete literarische Verhältnis der koptischen Petrusapokalypse zu 2 Petr (und zur griechisch/äthiopischen Offenbarung des Petrus) trefflich streiten: Während Terence V. Smith und Birger Pearson eine Vielzahl von Berührungspunkten, z.T. im Zusammenhang mit den polemischen Passagen beider Texte, z.T. in gemeinsamen Konzepten, herausarbeiten,[64] sieht zwar auch Henriette Havelaar Parallelen, möchte jedoch nur eine einzige Stelle, nämlich ApcPetr 79,31, als wahrscheinliches Signal der Rezeption des 2 Petr werten.[65] Doch selbst diese Parallele ist vage: Während die Apokalypse des Petrus hier ihre Gegner als „wasserlose Kanäle" beschreibt, verwendet 2 Petr

61 Hierzu z.B. W. Schneemelcher, „Das Kerygma Petri," in *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen II: Apostolisches, Apokalypsen und Verwandtes*, hg. von W. Schneemelcher (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 35: „Die Bezeugung und vermutete Benutzung des KP weisen diese Schrift in das 2. Jh. und zwar in die erste Hälfte des JH.... Als Heimatland wird man wohl Ägypten anzunehmen haben, auch wenn diese Vermutung nicht stringent beweisbar ist."

62 Hierzu Michel Cambe, *Kerygma Petri: textus et commentarius*, CChrSA 15 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 379–82, der den Text ebenfalls in Ägypten verortet.

63 Hierzu 22–23 im vorliegenden Band.

64 Vgl. Terrence V. Smith, *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity: Attitudes Toward Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries*, WUNT 2/15 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 138–40; Birger A. Pearson, „The Apocalypse of Peter and Canonical 2 Peter," in *Gnosticism and the Early Christian World: In Honor of James M. Robinson* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990), 69–73. Ihnen folgt weitgehend Jean-Daniel Dubois, „L'Apocalypse de Pierre (NHC VII,3)," in *Écrits gnostiques. La bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi*, hg. von J.-P. Mahé und P.-H. Poirier, Éditions de Pléiade 538 (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 1141–66.

65 Henriette W. Havelaar, „Die Apokalypse des Petrus (NHC VII,3)," in *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, hg. von Hans-Martin Schenke, Hans-Gebhard Bethge, und Ursula Ulrike Kaiser, 2nd hg. von (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2010), 411.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2,1 das Bild „wasserloser Quellen". Wo Literarkritik sich alleine mit dem Zählen übereinstimmender Wörter begnügt, ist hiermit natürlich ein (unbefriedigendes) Ende erreicht. Wolfgang Grünstäudl jedoch zeigt in seiner Diskussion der Stelle *in ihrem Kontext*, dass hier literarische Abhängigkeit aufgrund eines ganzen Clusters möglicher Echos des 2 Petr sehr wahrscheinlich ist.[66] Die Tatsache, dass 2 Petr den Petrus nicht nur als Autorität in engstem Bezug zu Christus inszeniert, als denjenigen, der auch über andere christliche Strömungen urteilt, sondern ihn auch als Schlüsselfigur, die die „Erkenntnis Gottes und Jesu, unseres Herrn" vermittelt, beschreibt, macht ihn zu einem idealen Text, der auch „gnostischen" Kreisen eine positive Deutung der Petrusfigur erlaubte: Während eine Vielzahl von—in einem weiten Sinne—der „gnostischen Bewegung" zuzuordnenden Schriften ein sehr negatives Bild des Petrus (oder auch des Petrus zusammen mit anderen Aposteln) entwickeln und andere zumindest seine Bedeutung relativieren, gehört die koptische Petrusapokalypse aus Nag Hammadi damit wohl in ihrer Anknüpfung an 2 Petr zu den ganz wenigen „gnostischen" Schriften, in denen Petrus die Rolle als entscheidender Autorität zukommt.[67] Die literarische Verbindung macht noch mehr Sinn, wenn wir die ApcPetr mit Jean-Daniel Dubois als einen Text aus dem Milieu der Schule des Basilides verstehen.[68] Der wohl entscheidende Link zwischen den erhaltenen Fragmenten und Referaten der Lehre des Basilides und der koptischen Apokalypse des Petrus besteht in der Deutung

66 Ausführlich Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 173–180 (der auch die hier nur knapp angeschnittene Forschungsgeschichte in allen Details diskutiert).

67 Überblicke über gnostische Petrusbilder bieten u.a. Th. Baumeister, „Die Rolle des Petrus in den gnostischen Texten," in *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Study*, hg. von Tito Orlandi und Frederik Wisse (Roma: C.I.M., 1985), 3–12; K. Berger, „Unfehlbare Offenbarung: Petrus in der gnostischen und apokalyptischen Offenbarungsliteratur," in *Kontinuität und Einheit. Festschrift für Franz Mussner zum 65. Geburtstag*, hg. von P.G. Müller und W. Stenger (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1981), 261–326, sowie in neuerer Zeit W. Pratscher, „Die Bedeutung des Petrus in gnostischen Texten," *SNTU.A* 37 (2012): 111–50. Ich selbst habe Pratschers Überlegungen noch einmal ausdifferenziert und um weitere Quellen erweitert. Vgl. Tobias Nicklas, „'Gnostic' Perspectives on Peter," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, hg. von Helen K. Bond und Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 196–221.

68 Vgl. knapp die Argumentation in Dubois, „L'Apocalypse de Pierre (NHC VII,3)" sowie ausführlicher Jean-Daniel Dubois, „Les gnostiques basilidiens et deux textes du Codex VII de Nag Hammadi," in *Nag Hammadi After 70 Years* (Quebec, im Druck); Jean-Daniel Dubois, „The Basilidians," in *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence: The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, hg. von Joseph Verheyden, Tobias Nicklas, und Elisabeth Hernitscheck, WUNT 388 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 141–58. Die Idee, Codex VII aus Nag Hammadi mit der Schule des Basilides in Bezug zu setzen, geht wiederum auf M. Tardieu, „Basilides," in *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*, hg. von R. Goulet (Paris: CNRS, 1994), 2:86, zurück.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

der Kreuzigung Jesu bei den Basilidianern. Irenäus von Lyon (haer. 1,24,4) beschreibt diese folgendermaßen:

> Darum hat auch nicht er [Christus; TN] gelitten, sondern ein gewisser Simon von Zyrene, den man zwang, sein Kreuz für ihn zu tragen. Der wurde dann aus Unwissenheit und Irrtum gekreuzigt, nachdem er von ihm so verwandelt worden war, dass man ihn für Jesus hielt; Jesus selbst hatte die Gestalt Simons angenommen, stand dabei und machte sich über sie lustig. Denn weil er die körperlose Kraft war und der Nous des ungezeugten Vaters, konnte er sich beliebig verwandeln und ist so zu dem aufgefahren, der ihn gesandt hatte, und lachte dabei über sie, da man ihn nicht festhalten konnte und er für alle unsichtbar war.[69]

Nimmt man mit Birger Pearson und Jean-Daniel Dubois an, dass die Vorstellung, Simon von Zyrene sei versehentlich gekreuzigt worden, sich einer Fehlinterpretation der dem Irenäus vorliegenden Quellen—eventuell einem Text wie dem Zweiten Logos des Großen Seth (NHC VII,2)—verdankt,[70] dann kommen wir der Deutung des Todes Jesu in der koptischen Petrusapokalypse sehr nahe. Entscheidend sind die beiden folgenden Passagen:[71]

> Der Sotēr sagte zu mir [Petrus; TN]: Der, den du heiter und lachend neben dem Holz siehst, das ist der lebendige Jesus. Der aber, in dessen Hände und Füße sie die Nägel schlagen, das ist sein Fleischesleib, der Ersatz. Sie machen nur das zuschanden, was nach seinem Bild entstanden ist. Aber sieh ihn und mich doch an.
>
> NHC VII,3–81,15–24

sowie:

> Und er wurde freigelassen, während er heiter dasteht, weil er sieht, dass die, die ihn gewalttätig behandelt haben, untereinander zerspalten sind. Deswegen: Er lacht über ihr Unvermögen zu sehen. Denn er weiß, dass

69 Übersetzung adaptiert von Norbert Brox, *Irenäus von Lyon. Epideixis. Darlegung der apostolischen Verkündigung. Adversus Haereses. Gegen die Häresien I* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1993), 301.

70 So Birger A. Pearson, „Basilides the Gnostic," in *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics,"* hg. von Antti Marjanen und Petri Luomanen, VCSup 76 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 22, und Dubois, „Basilideans."

71 Zitiert auch bei Dubois, „Basilidians."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> sie Blindgeborene sind. Der Leidende nun sei verflucht, weil sein Leib eine Art von Ersatz ist.
>
> NHC VII,3, 82,31–83,6[72]

Die in der koptischen Petrusapokalypse, aber auch dem Zweiten Logos des Großen Seth (NHC VII,2) erkennbare Christologie scheint zwar davon auszugehen,[73] dass der Sotēr bereits bei der Empfängnis als in Jesus inkarniert vorgestellt wird. Der Sotēr jedoch wohnt zwar in dem Menschen Jesus ein, hat aber sonst nichts mit ihm zu tun, sondern bleibt ihm fremd. So wird der Leib des gekreuzigten Jesus, der real leidet, jedoch nichts mit dem Sotēr zu tun hat, vom Sotēr differenziert, welcher mit dem aus der Sphäre des Geistes oberhalb der Archonten herabgestiegenen Nous, der nicht leiden kann, zu identifizieren ist[74] und sich bei der Kreuzigung vom Leib des Gekreuzigten löst. Mit diesem Vorgang wird die für die Basilidianer entscheidende Aufhebung der Vermischung der Elemente, also ein kosmischer Reinigungsprozess, in Gang gesetzt, in dem das, was zur oberen Welt jenseits der Archonten gehört, sich von dem zur unteren Welt der Formlosigkeit Gehörigen trennt.[75]

Die mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit in Ägypten entstandene, jedoch nur sehr schwer datierbare koptische Petrusapokalypse[76] scheint vom 2 Petr einerseits die Schlüsselstellung des Petrus und andererseits die Idee der „Erkenntnis Jesu

72 Beide Zitate adaptiert nach Havelaar, *Apokalypse des Petrus*, 599–600, und auch bei Dubois, „Basilidians," herangezogen.

73 Hierzu ausführlicher Dubois, „Basilidians."

74 Tatsächlich unterscheiden die Basilidianer sogar zwischen drei Aspekten, einem leiblichen Teil Jesu, der litt, einen „psychischen" Teil, der zum (negativ bewerteten) Schöpfergott Elohim aufsteigt, und einen pneumatischen Teil, der in die Sphäre oberhalb der Welten der Archonten aufsteigt (im Detail Dubois, „Basilidians").

75 Weiterführend Dubois, „Basilidians," sowie ders., „The Present Study of Ancient Gnostic Movements" [Vortragsreihe Regensburg 2016, unpubliziert]. Das eigentliche Argument ist natürlich deutlich komplexer und bezieht auch die häresiologischen Aussagen bei Irenäus und v.a. Hippolyt ein.

76 Man könnte durchaus an das (frühe?) 3. Jh. unserer Zeitrechnung denken; aufgrund der Nähe zu basilidianischem Denken ist eine Entstehung in Ägypten gut denkbar (so auch Pearson, „The Apocalypse of Peter and Canonical 2 Peter," 70–71, sowie Dubois, „Basilidians"). Selbst wenn dies nicht der Fall ist, bedeutet alleine schon die Tatsache, dass das einzige Exemplar des Textes in koptischer Sprache in der Nag Hammadi-Bibliothek vorliegt, dass er in Ägypten gelesen wurde. Für eine spätere Datierung—sehr präzise in die Jahre 320–340 unserer Zeitrechnung votiert dagegen Andrea Lorenzo Molinari, „The Apocalypse of Peter and its Dating," in *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica: mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, hg. von Louis Painchaud und Paul-Hubert Poirier, Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section Études 7 (Québec; Louvain: Les Presses de l'Université Laval; Peeters, 2006), 605.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Christi" weiterzuentwickeln:[77] Ähnlich wie in der griechisch/äthiopischen Offenbarung des Petrus ist der Text weitestgehend aus der Ich-Perspektive des Petrus erzählt, die erst im Schlusssatz in die dritte Person wechselt. Wie für die griechisch/äthiopische Offenbarung des Petrus ist auch für die koptische Petrusapokalypse das Matthäusevangelium v.a. in ihrer gegen die entstehende Mehrheitskirche, ihr Denken und ihre Hierarchie gerichteten Polemik[78] ein wichtiger Referenztext. Während 2 Petr noch die Briefe des Paulus—wenn auch deutlich distanziert—unter der Autorität des Petrus zu integrieren sucht, ist die koptische Petrusapokalypse nun deutlich antipaulinisch eingestellt.[79] Gleichzeitig werden entscheidende Passagen „kanonischer" Schriften[80] deutlich gegen den Strich gelesen. Interessant für die vorliegende Fragestellung ist zunächst die folgende Passage, in der der vom gekreuzigten Jesus zu differenzierende „Erlöser" (Sotēr) zu Petrus spricht:

> Du auch, Petrus, werde vollkommen, entsprechend deinem Namen, genauso wie ich, der ich dich erwählt habe, denn mit dir habe ich einen Anfang gemacht für die übrigen, die ich zur Erkenntnis berufen habe. Sei also stark solange die Nachahmung der Gerechtigkeit dessen, der dich früher berufen hat, dauert [Lakune]—er hat dich berufen, damit du ihn auf richtige Weise kennen würdest … So wird er dich dreimal in dieser Nacht tadeln.
>
> NHC VII,3 S. 71,15–72,3[81]

Die Szene setzt ganz offensichtlich der in Mt 16,17–19 erzählten Szene von der besonderen Erwählung des Petrus durch Jesus eine weitere Erwählung Petri entgegen, die ebenfalls den Namen des Petrus erwähnt. Wie der Petrus des Matthäusevangeliums, der Offenbarung des Petrus und des 2 Petr wird auch der der koptischen Petrusapokalypse als Träger und Zeuge besonderer Offenbarung beschrieben: Alle auf Jesus, „der dich früher berufen hat", zurückgehenden Offenbarungen jedoch sind wertlos, entscheidend ist die hier beschriebene Erwählung durch den Sotēr, in der erst die rettende „Erkenntnis" möglich wird, ja die Petrus zur Schlüsselfigur, zum Ausgangspunkt aller, die

77 Vgl. ähnliche Gedanken (jedoch noch ohne Zuordnung des Texts zur Bewegung des Basilides) Nicklas, „'Gnostic' Perspectives on Peter," 211–14.

78 Dubois, „Basilidians," verweist hier besonders auf S. 78,1–6.15–31 sowie 79,22–31.

79 So Dubois, „L'Apocalypse de Pierre (NHC VII,3)," 221–223, sowie Dubois, „Basilidians," mit Verweis auf NHC VII,3 S. 74,10–25.

80 Ich setze den Begriff „kanonisch" bewusst in Anführungszeichen, weil diese Texte aus Sicht der Trägergruppe der Petrusapokalypse kaum kanonischen Anspruch hatten.

81 Übersetzung adaptiert nach Havelaar, *Apokalypse des Petrus*, 596.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

„ich zur Erkenntnis berufen habe", macht. Wie in 2 Petr ist „Erkenntnis" mit Petrus verbunden. Dieser wird geradezu zu einer Autorität, an der vorbei solche „Erkenntnis" nicht möglich ist. Wahre Erkenntnis jedoch distanziert sich (wie auch der „lachende Sotēr" dies tut), von „Jesus" und wendet sich alleine dem Sotēr zu. Deswegen ist ganz offenbar Petri dreimalige Verleugnung Jesu (Mt 26,69–75 par.) nicht als Zeichen seines Versagens, sondern seiner Erkenntnis zu deuten, die sich erneut in der bereits referierten Kreuzigungsszene zeigt.

4 Ausblick: Petrinischer Diskurs in Alexandria und die Legende der Entstehung des alexandrinischen Christentums

Natürlich stehen uns heute nur noch Einzelteile eines ursprünglich größeren und komplexeren Mosaiks zur Verfügung. Gehört vielleicht auch das Judasevangelium mit seiner absolut negativen Darstellung der Jünger Jesu (und damit auch des Petrus) in den weiteren Rahmen eines „petrinischen Diskurses" in Alexandria (oder wenigstens Ägypten)?[82] Könnte das nur als winziges Fragment erhaltene „Fayûm-Evangelium" (P.Vindob. G 2325), das Reste einer nicht kanonischen Szene der Verleugnung Jesu durch Petrus, dessen Name im Fragment besonders markiert ist, erhalten hat, Indiz einer ansonsten verlorenen Stimme im ägyptischen Petrus-Diskurs sein?[83] Wo platzieren wir das in Akhmim entdeckte Petrus-Evangelium?[84] Und inwiefern lassen

82 Fürst, *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion*, 98–102, überlegt zumindest, ob dieser Text in Alexandria entstanden sein könnte, lehnt diesen Gedanken jedoch ab; auch Gregor Wurst, „Das Judasevangelium," in *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung 1: Evangelien und Verwandtes*, hg. von Christoph Markschies und Jens Schröter (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 1224, konkludiert „Über … den Entstehungsort des Werks ist nichts bekannt". Eine ägyptische Herkunft wäre jedoch wahrscheinlich, wollte man mit Jean-Daniel Dubois, „The Gospel of Judas and Basilidian Thought," in *Judasevangelium und Codex Tchacos: Studien zur religionsgeschichtlichen Verortung einer gnostischen Schriftensammlung*, hg. von Enno Edzard Popkes und Gregor Wurst, WUNT 297 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 121–32 in die Nähe basilidianischen Denkens bringen.—Dass diese Schrift, obwohl Petrus nicht explizit in ihr auftaucht, durchaus als polemisch gegen Petrus verstanden werden kann, habe ich in Nicklas, „'Gnostic' Perspectives on Peter," 202–204, gezeigt.

83 Edition: Thomas J. Kraus, „P.Vindob. G 2325: The So-Called Fayûm-Gospel: Re-Edition and Some Critical Conclusions," in Ad Fontes: *Original Manuscripts and Their Significance for Studying Early Christianity. Selected Essays*, TENT 3 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 69–94. Überlegungen zum Petrusbild dieses Fragmentes bei Paul Foster, „Peter in Noncanonical Traditions," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, hg. von Helen K. Bond und Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 225–27.

84 Edition: Kraus und Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse*.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

sich Brücken zwischen dem 2. und 3. Jahrhundert einerseits und den deutlich späteren, als „apostolische Erinnerungen" eingeordneten Texten bauen?[85] Unsere Versuche, die wenigen erhaltenen, z.T. den Zufällen der Überlieferung verdankten Einzelteile zu einem größeren Ganzen zusammenzufügen, sind immer in der Gefahr, Steinchen, auch wenn sie passend scheinen, an der falschen Stelle anzubringen, weil uns zu viel an Informationen fehlt. So möchte ich nicht den Anspruch stellen, dass jedes der hier zusammengetragenen Teile eines „petrinischen Diskurses", der sich wenigstens ansatzweise im Alexandria des 2. und wohl 3. Jahrhunderts unserer Zeitrechnung konstruieren lässt, wirklich an seinem angemessenen historischen Ort liegt. Letztendlich werden wir wohl nie ganz sicher sein können. Ich meine aber doch, dass die hier versuchte Zusammenstellung Sinn macht und mehr an Problemen löst, als sie aufwirft. Vielleicht erklären sich über sie noch zwei weitere Details der Geschichte des Christentums in Alexandria: So überliefert Clemens von Alexandria, str. VII 106,4 die kurze und rätselhafte Nachricht, Basilides' Lehrer Glaukias sei „Übersetzer" des Petrus gewesen. Dies ist natürlich, wie A. Fürst mit Recht sagt, „nicht als historische Nachricht zu betrachten, sondern als Ausdruck des Bemühens der Anhänger, der Lehre des Schulgründers apostolische Dignität zu verschaffen."[86] An anderer Stelle wiederum lesen wir bei Clemens, str. 7,108,1 und Hippolyt, haer. 7,20,1, die Basilidianer hätten den Anspruch gestellt, ihre Lehren auf den Apostel Matthäus zurückzuführen, dessen geheime Lehren wiederum auf Jesus selbst zurückgingen. Passen nicht beide „Mosaiksteinchen" noch besser, wenn die Lehre des Basilides in Alexandria nicht einfach bei Null ansetzen musste,[87] sondern bereits eine christliche Gruppierung vorfinden konnte, in der der Apostel Petrus als bedeutsame, ja entscheidende apostolische Autorität verehrt wurde und in dem neben der Offenbarung des Petrus mit einiger Wahrscheinlichkeit das Matthäusevangelium eine Rolle spielte?

85 Hier wäre z.B. an den lange Zeit als „Unbekanntes Berliner Evangelium" bezeichneten Text zu denken, der literarische Bezüge zum EvPetr aufzuweisen scheint, jedoch offenbar deutlich später zu datieren ist. Hierzu grundlegend jetzt Alin Suciu, *The* Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*: A Coptic Apostolic Memoir*, WUNT 370 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017). Weitere Beispiele in A. Campagnano, *Ps.Cirillo di Gerusalemme: Omelie copte sulla Passione, sulla Croce e sulla Vergine*, Testi e documenti per lo studi dell'Antichità (Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1980) sowie R. van den Broek, *Pseudo-Cyril of Jerusalem: On the Life and Passion of Christ. A Coptic Apocryphon*, VCSup 118 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013).

86 Fürst, *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion*, 21.

87 Dies impliziert im Grunde auch W.A. Löhr, *Basilides*, 326, wenn er schreibt: „Basilides und Isidor standen so am Anfang einer Epoche der christlichen Theologie und Kirchengeschichtem die von einer zunehmenden Öffnung der christlichen Gemeinden und Gruppen gegenüber der philosophischen Bildung der heidnischen Antike charakterisiert ist."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Und verbinden sie sich nicht auch mit der herausragenden Stellung des Petrus in der koptischen Petrusapokalypse? In welchem Bezug wiederum steht die Notiz über Glaukias zu dem bekannten Zeugnis des Papias (bei Eusebius von Caesarea, h.e. 3,39,15) über den Evangelisten Markus?[88] Ich lasse die Fragen bewusst als Fragen stehen.

Vielleicht lässt sich von Markus her zuguterletzt sogar noch ein weiterer Baustein finden: Die älteste Form der Legende von der Gründung des Christentums in Alexandria findet sich in der Kirchengeschichte des Eusebius von Caesarea. Die entscheidende Passage ist sehr kurz (h.e. II 16): „Markus soll als erster in Ägypten das von ihm niedergeschriebene Evangelium gepredigt und in Alexandrien als erster Kirchen gegründet haben." Dies hat zunächst nichts mit unserer Frage zu tun: Bedenkt man jedoch, dass „das von ihm niedergeschriebene Evangelium" nur einen Absatz zuvor (wohl in Verarbeitung der eben erwähnten Papiasnotiz) als von Petrus selbst autorisierte Niederschrift der Lehre des Petrus bezeichnet wird, steht somit auch hier petrinische Autorität am Beginn des alexandrinischen Christentums. Direkt nach der Markusnotiz wiederum lenkt Eusebius direkt auf Philo über, dem er zwei ganze Abschnitte widmet und ihn dabei ganz in die Nähe des Christentums (h.e. 2,17,2) bringt. Dieses Christentum ist nun erneut petrinisch—lesen wir doch nur zwei Sätze nach den Aussagen zur Gründung der Kirche Alexandriens: „Philo soll unter Claudius in Rom mit Petrus, als er damals den Bewohnern predigte, verkehrt haben" (h.e. II 16). Um nicht falsch verstanden zu werden: Ich gehe nicht davon aus, dass hinter diesen Aussagen im platten Sinne historische Fakten stehen. Vielleicht aber ist auch dieser Versuch, gegen alle äußere Evidenz das früheste Christentum Alexandrias in doppelter Linie mit petrinischer Autorität in Verbindung zu bringen, zumindest der Erinnerung verdankt, wie sehr „petrinische Diskurse" im Alexandrien des 2. Jahrhunderts eine Rolle gespielt haben mögen.

Literaturverzeichnis

Backhaus, K. „Der Hebräerbrief und die Paulus-Schule." *BZ* 37 (1993): 183–208.

Bauckham, Richard J. „A Quotation from 4Q Second Ezekiel in the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 259–68. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

88 Hierzu Löhr, „Christliche ‚Gnostiker' in Alexandria im zweiten Jahrhundert," 420, der die Petrus-Glaukias-Tradition als eine „rivalisierende Imitation der Petrus-Markus-Tradition" versteht, was aber keineswegs selbstverständlich sein muss.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. „The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. „The Two Fig Tree Parables in the Apocalypse of Peter." *JBL* 104 (1985): 269–87.

Baumeister, Th. „Die Rolle des Petrus in den gnostischen Texten." In *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Study*, hg. von Tito Orlandi und Frederik Wisse, 3–12. Roma: C.I.M., 1985.

Berger, K. „Unfehlbare Offenbarung: Petrus in der gnostischen und apokalyptischen Offenbarungsliteratur." In *Kontinuität und Einheit. Festschrift für Franz Mussner zum 65. Geburtstag*, hg. von P.G. Müller und W. Stenger, 261–326. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1981.

Bremmer, Jan N. „Orphic, Roman, Jewish und Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, hg. von Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, und Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Bremmer, Jan N. „The Apocalypse of Peter: Greek or Jewish?" In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, 1–14. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Broek, R. van den. *Pseudo-Cyril of Jerusalem: On the Life and Passion of Christ. A Coptic Apocryphon*. VCSup 118. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013.

Brox, Norbert. *Irenäus von Lyon. Epideixis. Darlegung der apostolischen Verkündigung. Adversus Haereses. Gegen die Häresien I*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1993.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars press, 1988.

Cambe, Michel. *Kerygma Petri: textus et commentarius*. CChrSA 15. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003.

Campagnano, A. *Ps.Cirillo di Gerusalemme: Omelie copte sulla Passione, sulla Croce e sulla Vergine*. Testi e documenti per lo studi dell'Antichità. Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1980.

Conzelmann, Hans. „Die Schule des Paulus." In *Theologia crucis—signum crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag*, hg. von Carl Andresen und Günter Klein, 85–96. Tübingen, 1979.

Culpepper, R. Alan. *The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-School Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools*. SBLDS 26. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1975.

Davids, Peter H. *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. PNTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Dieterich, Albrecht. *Nekyia. Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1893.

Dubois, Jean-Daniel. „L'Apocalypse de Pierre (NHC VII,3)." In *Écrits gnostiques. La bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi*, hg. von J.-P. Mahé und P.-H. Poirier, 1141–66. Éditions de Pléiade 538. Paris: Gallimard, 2007.

Dubois, Jean-Daniel. „Les gnostiques basilidiens et deux textes du Codex VII de Nag Hammadi." In *Nag Hammadi After 70 Years*. Quebec, im Druck.

Dubois, Jean-Daniel. „The Basilidians." In *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence: The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, hg. von Elisabeth Hernitscheck, Tobias Nicklas, und Joseph Verheyden, 141–158. WUNT 388. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Dubois, Jean-Daniel. „The Gospel of Judas and Basilidian Thought." In *Judasevangelium und Codex Tchacos: Studien zur religionsgeschichtlichen Verortung einer gnostischen Schriftensammlung*, hg. von Enno Edzard Popkes und Gregor Wurst, 121–32. WUNT 297. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Dunderberg, Ismo. „The School of Valentinus." In *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics,"* hg. von Antti Marjanen und Petri Luomanen, 64–99. VCSup 76. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Elliott, John H. *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 37B. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Elliott, John H. „Peter, Silvanus and Mark in 1 Peter and Sociological-Exegetical Perspectives on a Petrine Group in Rome." In *Wort in der Zeit neutestamentliche Studien: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag*, hg. von Wilfrid Haubeck und Michael Bachmann, 250–67. Leiden: Brill, 1980.

Foster, Paul. „Peter in Noncanonical Traditions." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, hg. von Helen K. Bond und Larry W. Hurtado, 222–62. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Frankfurter, David. *Elijah in Upper Egypt: The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity*. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Frey, Jörg. „Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'." In *Petrus in Rom*, hg. von Jörg Frey und Martin Wallraff. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck.

Fürst, Alfons. *Christentum als Intellektuellen-Religion: die Anfänge des Christentums in Alexandria*. SBS 213. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2007.

Goppelt, Leonhard. *Der erste Petrusbrief*. KEK 12/1. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1978.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. „Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament. Zur Konstruktion apostolischer Autorität in OffbPetr und 2 Petr." In *Between Canonical and Apocryphal Texts: Processes of Rewriting, Reception and Interpretation in Early*

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Judaism and Early Christianity, hg. von Claire Clivaz, Jörg Frey, und Tobias Nicklas. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Havelaar, Henriette W. „Die Apokalypse des Petrus (NHC VII,3)." In *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, hg. von Hans-Martin Schenke, Hans-Gebhard Bethge, und Ursula Ulrike Kaiser, 2nd ed., 410–16. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2010.

Heid, Stefan, ed. *Petrus und Paulus in Rom: Eine interdisziplinäre Debatte*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2011.

Herzer, Jens. *Petrus oder Paulus? Studien über das Verhältnis des ersten Petrusbriefes zur paulinischen Tradition*. WUNT 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.

Hoek, Annewies van den. „Papyrus Berolinensis 20915 in the Context of Other Early Christian Writings from Egypt." In *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, hg. von Lorenzo Perrone, 75–92. BETL 164. Leuven: Leuven University Press; Peeters, 2003.

Horn, Friedrich Wilhelm. „Die Petrus-Schule in Rom: Forschungsgeschichtliche Notizen zur Abfassungssituation des 1. Petrusbriefs." In *Bedrängnis und Identität Studien zu Situation, Kommunikation und Theologie des 1. Petrusbriefes*, hg. von David S. Du Toit, 3–20. BZNW 200. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013.

Jakab, Attila. „Le gnosticisme Alexandrin aux premiers temps du Christianisme." In *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian, and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuizen*, hg. von A. Hilhorst und Geurt H. van Kooten, 365–80. AGJU 59. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Jakab, Attila. „The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, 174–86. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

King, Karen L. *What Is Gnosticism?*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003.

Knoch, Otto. „Gab es eine Petrusschule in Rom? Überlegungen zu einer bedeutsamen Frage." *SNTU.A* 16 (1991): 105–26.

Kraus, Thomas J. „Acherusia und Elysion: Anmerkungen im Hinblick auf deren Verwendung auch im christlichen Kontext." *Mnemosyne* 56 (2003): 145–63.

Kraus, Thomas J. „P.Vindob. G 2325: The So-Called Fayûm-Gospel: Re-Edition and Some Critical Conclusions." In Ad Fontes: *Original Manuscripts and Their Significance for Studying Early Christianity. Selected Essays*, 69–94. TENT 3. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007.

Kraus, Thomas J. *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/136. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Kraus, Thomas J., und Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Löhr, Winrich A. *Basilides und seine Schule. Eine Studie zur Theologie- und Kirchengeschichte des zweiten Jahrhunderts*. WUNT 83. Tübingen: Mohr, 1996.

Löhr, Winrich A. „Christliche ‚Gnostiker' in Alexandria im zweiten Jahrhundert." In *Alexandria*, hg. von Tobias Georges, Felix Albrecht, und Reinhard Feldmeier, 413–33. COMES 1. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Lorenzo Molinari, Andrea. „The Apocalypse of Peter and its Dating." In *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica: mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, hg. von Louis Painchaud und Paul-Hubert Poirier, 583–605. Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section Études 7. Québec; Louvain: Les Presses de l'Université Laval; Peeters, 2006.

Najman, Hindy. *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*. JSJSup 77. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Nicklas, Tobias. „Auferstehung zu Tod und Strafe: Unpaulinische Auferstehungsvorstellungen im frühen Christentum." In *"If Christ has not been raised …": Studies on the Reception of the Resurrection Stories and the Belief in the Resurrection in the Early Church*, hg. von Joseph Verheyden, Andreas Merkt, und Tobias Nicklas, 105–21. NTOA 115. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016.

Nicklas, Tobias. „'Der geliebte Bruder': Zur Paulusrezeption im Zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, hg. von Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, und Uta Poplutz, 133–50. WUNT 397. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Nicklas, Tobias. *Der zweite Thessalonicherbrief*. KEK. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018.

Nicklas, Tobias. „'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times." In *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, hg. von Jonathan Knight und Kevin P. Sullivan, 183–200. LNTS 522. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015.

Nicklas, Tobias. „El hijo de Dios regio: sovre la cristología del Apocalipsis del Pedro." In *Filiación. Cultura pagana, religion de Israel, orígenes del cristianismo V*, hg. von Patricio de Navascués Benlloch, Manuel José Crespo Losada, und Andrés Sáez Gutiérrez, 275–88. Madrid: Trotta, 2014.

Nicklas, Tobias. „'Gnostic' Perspectives on Peter." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, hg. von Helen K. Bond und Larry W. Hurtado, 196–221. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Nicklas, Tobias. „'Insider' und 'Outsider': Überlegungen zum historischen Kontext der Darstellung 'jenseitiger Orte' in der Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Topographie des Jenseits: Studien zur Geschichte des Todes in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, hg. von Walter Ameling, 35–48. Altertumswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 21. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011.

Nicklas, Tobias. „Jenseits der Kategorien: Elchasai und die Elchasaiten." In *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence: The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, hg. von Joseph Verheyden, Tobias Nicklas, und Elisabeth Hernitscheck, 177–200 WUNT 388. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Nicklas, Tobias. „Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria." In *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, hg. von Luca Arcari, 27–46. STAC 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Nicklas, Tobias. „Judasbrief und Zweiter Petrusbrief." In *Der „Kritisch-Exegetische Kommentar" in seiner Geschichte. H.A.W. Meyers KEK von seiner Gründung 1829 bis heute*, hg. von Eve-Marie Becker, Friedrich W. Horn und Dietrich-Alex Koch, 386–403. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018.

Nicklas, Tobias. „Parting of the Ways? Probleme eines Konzepts." In *Juden—Heiden—Christen? Religiöse Inklusionen und Exklusionen im römischen Kleinasien bis Kaiser Decius*, hg. von Stefan Alkier und Hartmut Leppin, 21–42. WUNT 400. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018.

Nicklas, Tobias. „Petrusoffenbarung, Christusoffenbarung und ihre Funktion: Autoritätskonstruktion in der Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Author Concepts and Strategies of Authorization in Early Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature*, hg. von Jörg Frey, Franz Tóth, und Michael Jost. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, im Druck.

Norelli, Enrico. „L'adversaire eschatologique dans l'Apocalypse de Pierre." In *Les forces du bien et du mal dans les premiers siècles de l'église*, hg. von Yves-Marie Blanchard, Bernard Pouderon, und Maddalena Scopello, 291–317. Théologie historique 118. Paris: Beauchesne, 2011.

Pearson, Birger A. „Basilides the Gnostic." In *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics,"* hg. von Antti Marjanen und Petri Luomanen, 1–31. VCSup 76. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Pearson, Birger A. „The Apocalypse of Peter and Canonical 2 Peter." In *Gnosticism and the Early Christian World: In Honor of James M. Robinson*, 67–74. Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990.

Poirier, P.-H. „Basilide, Carpocrate, Valentin et la première gnose." In *Le Livre des Égyptes*, hg. von F. Quentin, 345–54. Paris: Robert Laffont, 2015.

Pouderon, Bernard. „'Jewish,' 'Christian,' and 'Gnostic' Groups in Alexandria during the 2nd Century: Between Approval and Expulsion." In *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, hg. von Luca Arcari. STAC 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Pratscher, W. „Die Bedeutung des Petrus in gnostischen Texten." *SNTU.A* 37 (2012): 111–50.

Rosenstiehl, J.-M. „Tartarouchos—Temelouchos." In *Deuxième journée d'études coptes. Strasbourg 25 mai 1984*, hg. von J.-M. Rosenstiehl, 29–56. Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 3. Leuven; Paris: Peeters, 1986.

Ruiten, J. van. „The Old Testament Quotations in the *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, hg. von Jan N. Bremmer und István Czachesz, 158–73. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Schmeller, Thomas. *Schulen im Neuen Testament? Zur Stellung des Urchristentums in der Bildungswelt seiner Zeit*. HBS 30. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001.

Schneemelcher, W. „Das Kerygma Petri." In *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen II: Apostolisches, Apokalypsen und Verwandtes*, hg. von W. Schneemelcher, 6th ed., 34–41. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999.

Schnelle, Udo. *Paulus. Leben und Denken*. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2003.

Schoene, A. *Eusebii Chronicorum canonum qui supersunt*. Dublin; Zürich: Weidmann, 1967.

Smith, Terrence V. *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity: Attitudes Toward Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries*. WUNT 2/15. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985.

Soards, M.L. „1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School." *ANRW* 2.25.5 (1988): 3827–49.

Sommer, M. „Reading the Apocalypse of Peter Politically: The Political Portrayal of Trahan and the Vision of Christ." In *Reading the Political in Jewish and Christian Texts*, hg. von J. Snyder und K. Zamfir. Biblical Tools and Studies. Leuven: Peeters, im Druck.

Suciu, Alin. *The* Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*: A Coptic Apostolic Memoir*. WUNT 370. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Tardieu, M. „Basilides." In *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*, hg. von R. Goulet, 2:84–89. Paris: CNRS, 1994.

Usener, Knut. „Ekpyrosis—ein (nicht nur) mythologisches Denkmodell in der Antike: Der Weltenbrand in der antiken Literatur." In *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, hg. von Luke Neubert und Michael Tilly, 149–81. BTS 137. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2013.

Vögtle, Anton. *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*. EKK 22. Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994.

Williams, Michael A. *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Wrede, William. *Die Echtheit des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefs*. TU 9.2. Leipzig: Akademie, 1903.

Wurst, Gregor. „Das Judasevangelium." In *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung 1: Evangelien und Verwandtes*, hg. von Christoph Markschies und Jens Schröter, 1220–34. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 5

The Second Letter of Peter, Josephus and Gnosticism

Terrance Callan

Professor Frey has made a provocative and plausible case for 2 Peter's dependence on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In what follows I will argue 2 Peter's possible relationship to two other items. Both have been proposed in the past, but are presently rejected by scholars. The first proposal is that 2 Peter shows evidence its author had read Josephus; the second is that the false teachers opposed by 2 Peter were Gnostics.[1]

1 2 Peter and Josephus

Use of Josephus by 2 Peter was first argued by Edwin A. Abbott in 1882.[2] F.W. Farrar agreed that Abbott had proved a literary relationship between the two, but thought use of 2 Peter by Josephus was just as likely as the reverse.[3] Abbott's arguments were rejected by Benjamin B. Warfield and others[4] and have mostly been abandoned today.[5]

1 At present the meaning and adequacy of Gnosticism as a category is questioned by many, including Michael Allen Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) and Karen L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2003). Nevertheless, "Gnosticism" continues to be used, as it is in this essay, as a convenient name for the various groups criticized by Irenaeus and other such writers and the various views expressed in the Nag Hammadi texts and similar writings. A recent example of this usage can be seen in Birger A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007).

2 Edwin A. Abbott, "On the Second Epistle of Peter I. Had the Author Read Josephus?," *Expositor* 2/3 (1882): 49–63.

3 F.W. Farrar, "Dr. Abbott on the Second Epistle of St. Peter," *Expositor* 2/3 (1882): 403–10.

4 Benjamin B. Warfield, "Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Genuineness of Second Peter," *Southern Presbyterian Review* 34 (1883): 421–44; George Salmon, *A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament* (London: Murray, 1889), 547–56; Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907), cxxvii–cxxx; M.R. James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*, CGTSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), xxv; L. Fillion, "Pierre (Deuxième Épitre de Saint)," in *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, vol. 5 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1912), cols. 409–410.

5 Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 140.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_006
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Abbott's purpose in arguing that 2 Peter had used Josephus was to show that 2 Peter was written too late to have been written by Peter.[6] His argument was based mainly on the use by 2 Peter of groups of uncommon words found in particular passages of Josephus's writings. Abbott argued that 2 Peter especially used two passages from Josephus's *Antiquities*, namely 1.14–26 and 4.177–93.[7] In further support of the idea that 2 Peter used these passages of Josephus, Abbott also mentioned two places where single words and isolated phrases are found in both 2 Peter and Josephus: 2 Pet 2:10 is similar to *J. W.* 3.475 and 2 Pet 1:19 is similar to *Ant.* 11.280. Finally, Abbott mentioned two places where the language of 2 Peter was not at all similar to that of Josephus, but where the two agree in supplementing the biblical narrative in the same way: 2 Pet 2:5 agrees with *Ant.* 1.74, and 2 Pet 2:16 agrees with *Ant.* 4.109.

In rejecting Abbott's argument, Warfield begins by denying that the two places where single words and isolated phrases are found in both 2 Peter and Josephus, and the two places where the two authors similarly supplement the biblical narrative, demonstrate, or even support, a literary connection between them.[8] Warfield responds to Abbott's main argument by observing that the method Abbott has used to argue 2 Peter used Josephus is "an exceedingly unsafe one"[9] and that Abbott has not made very good use of it. Warfield criticizes Abbott's use of his method on four grounds:

1. Abbott fails to distinguish among different kinds of evidence with different degrees of persuasive force. Warfield lists four different kinds of evidence in increasing order of persuasiveness:
    a) general resemblance of vocabulary
    b) common possession of a peculiar vocabulary
    c) a number of rare words grouped together in a brief context in one, found also in the other, either 1) scattered through the writing, or 2) similarly grouped.
    d) clauses or sentences occurring in both, either verbatim or nearly so, or with strongly marked similarities.
2. Abbott does not carefully remove from his list of similarities items that do not suggest borrowing. By this Warfield mainly means words that are too common to suggest borrowing, but he also means words that might be accounted for by borrowing from another source.

6 Abbott, "Second Epistle of Peter I," 49–52.

7 Abbott discusses the first of these passages on pp. 56–59 and the second on pp. 59–61 of "Second Epistle of Peter I."

8 Warfield, "Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Genuineness of Second Peter," 422–24.

9 Ibid., 428.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3. Abbott does not distinguish between "what is sound and what is merely plausible."[10]
4. Abbott does not argue sufficiently for his explanation of the similarities between the two writings over against other possible explanations.

Despite all this, Warfield acknowledges that there are indeed similarities between 2 Peter and Josephus, though he denies that they indicate dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus.[11]

George Salmon's rejection of Abbott's argument is similar but much more sweeping. He first notes that Abbott's alleged similarities between 2 Peter and Josephus "relate entirely to words and not at all to the thoughts."[12] Salmon then argues that the similarities 1) do not appear in passages of brief compass; 2) are not in the same sequence and connection; and 3) do not involve unusual or startling words. He elaborates the last point at some length, especially observing that Abbott improperly regards any words that do not occur in the Septuagint as unusual. Finally Salmon argues that the combinations of words to which Abbott appeals are of a commonplace character. Salmon concludes that Abbott "has completely failed to establish his theory."[13]

Salmon and those who follow him (James, Fillion, Bauckham) completely reject Abbott's argument, but this rejection seems excessive. Farrar responded to Salmon's arguments in some detail.[14] Farrar argues that the similarities between 2 Peter and Josephus 1) do appear in relatively brief passages, 2) in somewhat the same sequence and 3) involve somewhat unusual words and phrases. In addition, it is not accurate to say that the resemblances between 2 Peter and Josephus relate only to words and not at all to thoughts.[15] As we have noted above, even as Warfield criticized Abbott's argument, he admitted the existence of significant similarities between 2 Peter and Josephus. Likewise, Joseph B. Mayor does not think the connection between 2 Peter and Josephus is as close as Abbott suggests, but acknowledges that there is a marked resemblance between the vocabulary and many of the ideas of the two writers.[16]

Abbott's critics have at least identified some weaknesses of his argument that must be acknowledged. As Salmon says, we can certainly not regard vocabulary as unusual simply because it is not used by the Septuagint. We can

10 Ibid., 433.
11 Ibid., 438–39, 443.
12 Salmon, *A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament*, 549.
13 Ibid., 556. James makes the same argument more briefly (*Second Epistle General of Peter,* xxv) as does Fillion, "Pierre (Deuxième Épitre de Saint)," cols. 409–10.
14 F.W. Farrar, "The Second Epistle of St. Peter and Josephus," *Expositor* 3/8 (1888): 58–69.
15 Ibid., 62–65.
16 Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxix.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

agree with Warfield that the two places where 2 Peter and Josephus supplement the biblical narrative in similar ways do not suggest a literary relationship between the two. We can also agree that the strongest evidence for such a literary relationship consists of instances where 1) a number of rare words grouped together in a brief context in one, are found also in the other similarly grouped, and 2) clauses or sentences occur in both, either verbatim or nearly so, or with strongly marked similarities. The two passages on which Abbott mainly focused provide evidence of somewhat this kind.

One of these passages, *Ant.* 4.177–93, is one of Moses's farewell speeches. Abbott himself noted parallels to the vocabulary of this passage scattered throughout 2 Peter. His critics have rightly objected that many of these words are not very uncommon. However, a number of these parallels are found in 2 Pet 1:12–15, a passage that refers explicitly to 2 Peter as providing a farewell message from Peter.[17] These parallels, even if they do not involve very uncommon words, are more suggestive of a literary relationship.

	Ant. 4.177–93	2 Pet 1:12–15
a)	In the future Moses will not (οὐ μέλλω) be the Israelites' helper (177)	Peter will (μελλήσω) always remind those he addresses (v 12)
b)	Moses considered it right (δίκαιον ἡγησάμην) to continue working for the Israelites (178)	Peter considers it right (δίκαιον δὲ ἡγοῦμαι) to remind the addressees (v 13)
c)	Moses provides a lasting memory (μνήμην) of himself (178)	Peter wants the addressees to have memory (μνήμην) of these things (v 15)
d)	Israelites' possession of good things will rest assured (βεβαία) (180, cf. 192)	Addressees are established (ἐστηριγμένους) in truth (v 12)
e)	Present (παρόντων) laws of the Israelites (181)	Present (παρούσῃ) truth of addressees (v 12)
f)	As long as (ἐφ' ὅσον) the Israelites want God's protection (185)	As long as (ἐφ' ὅσον) Peter is in this tent (v 13)
g)	Moses is at his exit from life (ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ τοῦ ζῆν) (189)	Peter refers to what will happen after his departure (μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξοδον) (v 15)

17 Hans Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe*, ed. Herbert Preisker, 3rd ed., HNT 15 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1951), 87–88, also notes some of these parallels though he does not conclude there is a literary relationship between the two.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

h)	Moses does not want to call painful memories to mind (εἰς ἀνάμνησιν φέρων) (189)	Peter wants to remind the addressees (ὑπομιμνῄσκειν—v 12) (διεγείρειν ὑμᾶς ἐν ὑπομνήσει—v 13)

Abbott mentions all of these items except "d" which is less persuasive than others because it involves synonyms rather use of the same words. This also applies to "h." The remaining items are more strongly suggestive of a literary relationship between the two passages. None of these words is really uncommon and all suit the general situation of farewell. However, we can see from another farewell speech of Moses in Josephus, namely *Ant.* 4.309–19, that the terms are not inevitable in such a context. The latter passage includes only μνήμην (318).[18]

Probably the most striking item on the list is use of the term "departure" (ἔξοδος) for death (item "g"). Warfield argues that 2 Peter derived this term from Luke 9:31.[19] To me this seems no more likely than that it was derived from Josephus.[20] Salmon argues that the presence of the term in Luke shows that it was in 2 Peter's linguistic sphere. This certainly makes it impossible to argue that 2 Peter must have derived the word from Josephus, but not that it might have been suggested by Josephus.

The other passage on which Abbott focused, *Ant.* 1.14–26, is part of the prologue to the *Antiquities*. As with *Ant.* 4.177–93, Abbott himself noted parallels to the vocabulary of *Ant.* 1.14–26 scattered throughout 2 Peter. A number of these parallels are found in 2 Pet 1:16–18. These parallels are most suggestive of a literary relationship.

	Ant. 1.14–26	2 Peter 1:16–18
a)	God the father and master (πατήρ τε καὶ δεσπότης ὁ θεός) (20)	God the father (θεοῦ πατρός) (v 17)
b)	Unlike Moses, other legislators followed myths (μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες) (22)	Peter and others did not follow myths (μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες) (v 16)
c)	In following myths these legislators gave the wicked a powerful excuse (22)	Peter clearly fears that people will use the mythical character of his teaching as an excuse
d)	The majesty of God (μεγαλειότητα) (24)	The majesty (μεγαλειότητος) of Jesus (v 16)

18 *Ant.* 4.309–19 also uses πάρειμι several times, but not in the sense found in item "e."

19 Warfield, "Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Genuineness of Second Peter," 432.

20 Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 202) rejects dependence of 2 Peter 1:15 on Luke 9:31.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Abbott mentions items "b" and "d" and they are the ones most suggestive of a literary relationship between 2 Peter and Josephus. This is especially true of "b." Neither of these words is rare, and their use together is not surprising. But I have not been able find any other passage in which they are in fact used together as they are here. Warfield argues that 2 Peter derived μεγαλειότητος from Luke 9:43.[21] Salmon again argues that the word was in 2 Peter's linguistic sphere and so need not have derived from Josephus.

Abbott did not mention another passage from Josephus, namely *Ant.* 9.51–59, that also has some similarity to 2 Pet 1:16–18. In this passage Josephus recounts an incident from the life of Elisha found in 2 Kgs 6:8–23.

	Ant. 9.51–59	2 Pet 1:16–18
a)	Elisha asked God to manifest God's power and coming (τὴν αὐτοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν) to Elisha's servant (55)	Peter and others made known the power and coming (δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν) of Jesus Christ (v 16)
b)	In response to Elisha's prayer, God permitted Elisha's servant to see (θεάσασθαι) horses and chariots around Elisha (55)	Peter and others were eyewitnesses (ἐπόπται) of Jesus's majesty (v 16)

Item "a" is the weightier. It also involves the use of words that are not very uncommon, whose use together is not surprising. But I have not been able to find any other passage in which they are used together as they are here. Both cases also involve seeing ("b") something. Of course, exactly what is seen and what it signifies differs in the two cases.

Thus there is reason to think that there is a literary relationship between 2 Pet 1:12–15 and Josephus, *Ant.* 4.177–93, and between 2 Pet 1:16–18 and two different passages in Josephus, namely, *Ant.* 1:14–26 and 9.51–59. Warfield observes that there are at least four different ways to account for such similarities:

1. Second Peter borrowed from Josephus
2. Josephus borrowed directly or indirectly from 2 Peter
3. The resemblances are due to the influence of a writing known to, and affecting the language of, both
4. The resemblances are due to the common circumstances, surroundings, training and inheritances of the writers.

21 Warfield, "Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Genuineness of Second Peter," 432.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Warfield rejects the first explanation because he thinks it is almost certain that 2 Peter was composed earlier than 90, too early for the author to have used Josephus's *Antiquities*.[22] He does not think it possible to choose among the remaining three explanations. Mayor embraces the fourth explanation, attributing the similarities to the authors' being "Jews, trained on the old sacred books and familiar with later Jewish writings, such as Philo."[23] To me it seems that the first explanation is the most likely. It seems unlikely that Josephus would have borrowed from 2 Peter, both because it seems unlikely that Josephus would have known 2 Peter even if it was already in existence at the time Josephus wrote, and because 2 Peter was probably written after the time of Josephus.[24] There is no direct evidence that a source common to 2 Peter and Josephus existed. And I am not sure how similar the circumstances, training and inheritances of the two writers were. This leaves 2 Peter's borrowing from Josephus the most likely of the four.

If it can be considered likely that 2 Peter used Josephus, some of the other points of similarity between them mentioned by Abbott can be considered supportive of this. Two of these are rather striking. In *Ant.* 11.280 a letter from Artaxerxes, king of Persia, refers to letters sent by Haman as something the recipients will do well to disregard (οἷς ποιήσετε καλῶς μὴ προσέχοντες). Second Peter 1:19 says that the prophetic word is something the addressees will do well to heed (ᾧ καλῶς ποιεῖτε προσέχοντες). The words that make up these clauses are not uncommon, and there is nothing striking about this way of combining them. But if on other grounds we have reason to think 2 Peter used Josephus, this similarity could be another instance of phraseology suggested to the author of 2 Peter by Josephus. Similarly, *J. W.* 3.475 says that the Jews, even if very bold and despisers of death (τολμηταὶ καὶ θανάτου καταφρονοῦντες), are a rabble rather than an army. Second Peter 2:10 speaks of people who despise dominion and then says that they are bold (κυριότητος καταφρονοῦντας. τολμηταὶ). These words might also have been suggested to the author of 2 Peter by his reading of Josephus.

And if it can be considered likely that 2 Pet 1:16–18 used Josephus, *Ant.* 1:14–26, the Josephus passage may also underlie 2 Pet 1:3–4 as Abbott suggested.

22 Ibid., 439–41.

23 Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxix.

24 On the date of 2 Peter see Terrance Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014), 35–37.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

	Ant. 1.14–26	2 Pet 1:3–4
a)	Moses's conception of God's nature (φύσιν) (15)—Moses thought it necessary first to study the nature of God (θεοῦ…φύσιν) (19)	Divine nature (θείας…φύσεως) (v 4)
b)	Moses always assigned to God actions worthy of his power (δυνάμει) (15)	Divine power (θείας δυνάμεως) (v 3)[25]
c)	Moses wrote in regard to virtue (ἀρετῆς)—calamities befall those who step outside the path of virtue (20)—God possesses the perfection of virtue (23)	His own glory and virtue (ἀρετῇ) (v 3)
d)	God grants those who follow him a happy life (βίον) (20)	Everything for life (ζωήν) (v 3)
e)	Obedience to piety (εὐσέβειαν) (21)	Everything for life and piety (εὐσέβειαν) (v 3)
f)	Humans should strive to participate in (μεταλαμβάνειν) God's virtue (23)	You may become sharers (κοινωνοί) of divine nature (v 4)[26]

The parallels between *Ant.* 1:14–26 and 2 Pet 1:3–4 are less striking than the parallels between it and 2 Pet 1:16–18, though still considerable. The nouns φύσις, δύναμις, ἀρετή, and εὐσέβεια are found in both (a, b, c and e). Although they are not used in similar phrases, they are used in comparable descriptions of God and the way people should relate to God. Somewhat similarly, "d" and "f" use synonyms to present comparable ideas. These parallels would probably not themselves suggest dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus, but are supportive of such dependence established on another basis.

And finally, if it can be considered likely that 2 Peter used Josephus, *Ant.* 1:14–26, the Josephus passage may also underlie 2 Pet 2:9–10a as Abbott suggested. In the *Antiquities* passage Josephus twice summarizes the lesson to be learned from the history of the Jews. In section 14 he says the lesson is that those who follow the will of God receive happiness as a reward; those who do

25 Josephus uses the phrase θείᾳ…δυνάμει in *Ant.* 9.58.

26 Josephus uses κεκοινώνηκεν in section 18 to speak of the degree to which *Antiquities* partakes of natural philosophy. In *Ant.* 4.177 Moses addresses the Israelites as partners (κοινωνοὶ) in a long tribulation.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

not, experience irretrievable disasters. In section 20 Josephus says the lesson is that God gives those who follow him a happy life, but brings great disasters on those who depart from virtue. In section 23 Josephus says God punished (ἐκόλασε) those who did not believe these doctrines. In 2 Pet 2:9–10a the author draws the conclusion from the Biblical stories he has summarized in 2:4–8 that the Lord knows how to rescue the pious from trial and to keep the unjust confined (κολαζομένους) for the day of judgment. In vocabulary this is not very similar to Josephus's summaries, and it has an apocalyptic character completely absent from Josephus. But like the Josephus passage, it summarizes the import of the Biblical narrative as an assurance of good things for those in harmony with God, and bad things for those who are not. Once again, this similarity would not in itself suggest dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus, but is supportive of such dependence otherwise established.

2 2 Peter and Gnosticism

At least since the publication of Hermann Werdermann's *Die Irrlehrer des Judas- und 2. Petrusbriefes* in 1913, many have argued that the false teachers opposed by 2 Peter were Gnostics. More specifically, they argued that the false teachers were Gnostics of the type that were opposed by Paul, especially in 1 Corinthians. Thus they were not understood as representatives of the Gnostic schools that appeared in the second century, but rather as incipient Gnostics or proto-Gnostics.[27] In 1977, however, Tord Fornberg argued that the false teachers were not Gnostics, but rather Gentile Christians influenced by the deterministic view of the universe and moral standards current in their cultural context.[28] And even more importantly, in 1980 Jerome H. Neyrey argued that

27 Hermann Werdermann, *Die Irrlehrer des Judas- und 2. Petrusbriefes* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1913). Others who have taken this position include: Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 239–41; Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe*, 98–99; Ernst Käsemann, "An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology," in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. by W.M. Montague (London: SCM, 1964), 170–72; K.H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe, Der Judasbrief*, HTK 13/2 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1961), 230–34; J.N.D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, BNTC (London: Black, 1969), 231; Walter Grundmann, *Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, THKNT 15 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1974), 62–64. Charles H. Talbert, "II Peter and the Delay of the Parousia," *VC* 20 (1966): 137–45, argued that the false teachers were second-century Gnostics, but not representatives of the named schools of second-century Gnosticism.

28 Tord Fornberg, *An Early Church in a Pluralistic Society: A Study of 2 Peter*, ConBNT 9 (Lund: Gleerup, 1977), 65, 104–5, 119–20, 132. Fornberg explained those criticized by Paul in 1 Corinthians in the same way (see pp. 104–105, 126).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the false teachers were not Gnostics[29] and that there are significant similarities between the views of the false teachers and Epicurean polemics against Providence.[30] Since that time most commentators, including Jörg Frey,[31] have rejected the view that the false teachers are Gnostics and instead regard them as influenced by Epicureanism or popular philosophy more generally.[32]

For example, Richard J. Bauckham argues that the false teachers were influenced by Hellenistic religious debate and were not Gnostics. He gives two reasons for saying they were not Gnostics. The first is that there is no evidence the false teachers held "the cosmological dualism which is the essential mark of true Gnosticism;" the second is that there is no evidence the false teachers' "ethical libertinism was based on such dualism, or that their eschatological skepticism resulted from a Gnostic concentration on realized, at the expense of future, eschatology."[33] Gene L. Green also argues that the false teachers were not Gnostics and suggests that they were eclectics whose views combined at least four elements: 1) skepticism about the possibility of predictive prophecy, 2) the question of the immutability of the world, 3) the promise of freedom, and 4) embrace of immoral conduct.[34] Not all recent commentators have adopted such accounts of the false teachers. Terence V. Smith views them as Gnostics.[35] Henning Paulsen argues that little can be known about the false teachers.[36] Michael Green continues to maintain the view that the false

29 Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Apologetic Use of the Transfiguration in 2 Peter 1:16–21," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 506.

30 Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter," *JBL* 99 (1980): 407–31.

31 See p. 11 in the present volume.

32 On this development in the understanding of the false teachers see Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3724–28; Thomas Scott Caulley, "'They Promise Them Freedom': Once again, the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι in 2 Peter," *ZNW* 99 (2008): 130–32.

33 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 156. Others who take similar positions include Pheme Perkins, *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude*, Interpretation (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1995), 161–62; Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006), 132–36; Caulley, "'They Promise Them Freedom'"; Lewis R. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude*, NTL (Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2010), 209–10.

34 Gene L. Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008), 153–59. Green's second element is based on Edward Adams, "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4," *NTS* 51 (2005): 106–22.

35 Terrence V. Smith, *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity: Attitudes Toward Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries*, WUNT 2/15 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 92–93. Smith lists a number of earlier scholars who think the false teachers are Gnostics.

36 Henning Paulsen, *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*, KEK 12/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 95–97.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

teachers were incipient Gnostics, possibly influenced by the letters of Paul.[37] Daniel J. Harrington also suggests that the false teachers may be Paulinists.[38] Nevertheless, the view that the false teachers are Gnostics has largely been abandoned.

In what follows I will argue that the false teachers are best understood as Gnostics. It is, of course, true that there is no evidence the false teachers were cosmological dualists, or that their eschatological skepticism and ethical libertinism derived from Gnosticism. It is also true that Gnosticism is not the only way to account for the false teachers' eschatological and ethical positions. However, since it is known that there were Christian Gnostics and since Gnosticism is a viable explanation of the false teachers' views, the hypothesis that they were Gnostics remains a strong one. We do not have similar independent confirmation that there existed Christian groups with the characteristics attributed to the false teachers by Fornberg, Neyrey, Bauckham and Green.

How might Gnostic views account for the false teachers' eschatological skepticism and ethical libertinism? It seems fairly clear that some of those opposed by Paul in 1 Corinthians thought that salvation was a present reality with little or nothing to be awaited in the future (cf. 1 Cor 4:8; 15:12). And some of those he opposed were libertines (cf. 1 Cor 5:1; 6:15). Insofar as those opposed by Paul were incipient Gnostics, this libertinism and lack of future eschatological expectation can be seen as characteristic of Gnosticism.

The understanding of Gnosticism as characterized by emphasis on realized eschatology is explored at some length by Malcom Peel in his article "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament."[39] Peel points out that the Nag Hammadi texts show future eschatology was not entirely lacking in Gnosticism, even if it is less prominent than realized eschatology.[40] Peel points especially to the expectation that in the future the scattered sparks of divine light will all be reunited with God, and the material world will come to an end.

37 Michael Green, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*, TNTC 18 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 37–40; so also Otto Knoch, *Der Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief. Der Judasbrief*, RNT (Regensburg: Pustet, 1990), 208–12; and Robert Harvey and Philip H. Towner, *2 Peter & Jude*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2009), 17, though they do not refer to the possible influence of Paul's letters.

38 Daniel J. Harrington, "Jude and 2 Peter," in *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, by Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, SP 15 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 235.

39 Malcolm Peel, "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament," *NovT* 12 (1970): 143–55. A more recent treatment of Gnosticism as characterized by realized eschatology can be seen in Simone Pétrement, *A Separate God: The Christian Origins of Gnosticism*, trans. by Carol Harrison (San Francisco: Harper, 1990), 160–62.

40 Peel, "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament," 155–62.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

One example of Gnostic future eschatology is provided by the Nag Hammadi Revelation of Peter, a text that seems to have some relationship to 2 Peter.[41] Smith suggests that the Revelation of Peter represents the kind of Gnosticism against which 2 Peter argues;[42] Birger A. Pearson argues that the Revelation of Peter depends on 2 Peter.[43] The Revelation of Peter recounts a conversation between Peter and Jesus shortly before Jesus's arrest and crucifixion. Peter describes several visions to Jesus, and Jesus interprets them. The central section of the document is a lengthy discourse of Jesus (NHC VII 73.10–81.3) that interprets the first vision Peter describes to Jesus. This discourse predicts opposition between the little ones who are the true followers of Jesus and other, false Christians. Jesus promises punishment of the latter and reward for the former. The false Christians will experience eternal destruction (NHC VII 75.21–22), will dissolve into non-existence (NHC VII 76.18–23), be cast into outer darkness (NHC VII 78.23–24), be punished (NHC VII 79.17). On the other hand, the little ones will receive a reward (NHC VII 80.15–16). Perhaps the single most striking element is the reference to the future παρουσία of Jesus in NHC VII 78.6. This, however, is only mentioned in passing; nothing is said about its significance or what will happen when Jesus returns.

In view of this, we can say more precisely that what is lacking in Gnosticism is not future expectation, but rather expectation of a future for the material world. While Gnostics may have expected the end of the material universe, they did not expect a new heaven and earth after that end. And they did not expect the physical return of the redeemer. Nor did they give credence to prophecy since it was an element of the material universe. Thus Gnosticism could well account for the eschatological views 2 Peter is concerned to oppose.

In principle, Gnosticism allowed for ethical libertinism and Gnostics were criticized for it by the Church Fathers.[44] None of the Nag Hammadi texts seem to take a libertine position. This raises the question to what extent the Gnostics actually were libertines. But whether they were libertines, or were simply vilified for libertinism, Gnosticism could account for 2 Peter's ethical criticisms of the false teachers and their followers.

41 This text is also known as the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but should not be confused with the other text known as the *Apocalypse of Peter* on which Professor Frey focuses.

42 Smith, *Petrine Controversies*, 126–41, especially 137–41.

43 Birger A. Pearson, "The *Apocalypse of Peter* and Canonical 2 Peter," in *Gnosticism and the Early Christian World: In Honor of James M. Robinson* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990), 67–74.

44 Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, trans. by R. McL. Wilson (San Francisco: Harper, 1987), 252–57.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

If we have established the likelihood that the false teachers were Gnostics, can we say what kind of Gnostics they were? J.W.C. Wand and Smith suggest that 2 Peter might be directed specifically against followers of Basilides.[45] I agree that there is some reason to think the false teachers may be followers of Basilides.

In the first place, Basilides, like other Gnostics, did not expect salvation of the material world. And like other Gnostics, he was said to be ethically libertine. The first of these is not explicit in accounts of Basilides's teaching, but is implied by the presentation of material creation as deriving from powers inferior to the true God (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.4) and the view that salvation belongs to the soul alone while the body is by nature subject to corruption (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.5).[46] In *Haer.* 1.24.3 Irenaeus describes Basilides's view that from the unoriginate Father originated successively five beings: Nous, Logos, Phronesis, Sophia and Dynamis. From Sophia and Dynamis originated powers, principalities and angels who made the first heaven. From them emanated other angels who made a second heaven. This happened again and again until a total of 365 heavens were made. The last of these is the one humans see. Smith thinks Basilides "maintained that the heavens would continue to be formed forever and would therefore never be destroyed" citing Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.3.[47] This is possible, but not explicit in Irenaeus, and I think it equally likely that Basilides would have expected such destruction. Second Peter's argument that this world will end and be replaced by a new heaven and earth would have been appropriate as a response either to the view that the heavens would continue to be formed forever, or to the view that they would be destroyed and not

45 J.W.C. Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (London: Methuen, 1934), 142; Smith, *Petrine Controversies*, 92–93. Smith thinks 2 Peter is directed both against the kind of Gnosticism represented by the Revelation of Peter and against the followers of Basilides. This seems to imply that the Revelation of Peter represents the teaching of Basilides, but Smith does not take up this implication. The idea that the Revelation of Peter might be Basilidean is entertained by Michel Desjardins in the introduction to the text in Birger A. Pearson ed., *The Coptic Gnostic Library: A Complete Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices* vol. 4: *Nag Hammadi Codex VII* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 208.

46 Like others, I derive my information about Basilides from the account of Irenaeus and the fragments of Basilides's teaching found mainly in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, and make little use of the very different account of Basilides given by Hippolytus. Bentley Layton suggests that Hippolytus's account may reflect later development of Basilides's teaching (Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations and Introductions* [ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1987] 418–19 n. 2).

47 Smith, *Petrine Controversies*, 93. Smith sees this as the principal reason for thinking 2 Peter might be directed against Basilideans. Because of uncertainty that this actually was Basilides's position, I give equal weight to the other items Smith mentions, all of which are discussed below.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

replaced. Basilides apparently expected what he called the restoration,[48] but its meaning for him is uncertain. Perhaps it referred to the reunion of the scattered sparks of divine light with God.[49]

Irenaeus explicitly asserts Basilides's libertinism (*Haer.* 1.24.5). However, judging from the surviving fragments of his teaching, if Basilides may be regarded as a libertine at all, it is only in the sense that he considered behavior a matter of indifference. Basilides apparently took the Stoic view that one should align oneself with the order in the universe. One should love all that is, desiring nothing and having nothing (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 4.12 § 86.1).[50] Basilides further argues that all suffering is a consequence of the sufferer's sins and thus part of the order in the universe. He applies this to martyrs, to children and to Jesus (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 4.12 § 81.2–83.2). Second Peter's argument that a virtuous life is necessary to continue in one's status as a person saved by Jesus would be appropriate as a response to libertinism or to the view that behavior does not matter.

Like some other Gnostics, Basilides denied the crucifixion of Jesus. According to Irenaeus, Basilides maintained that Jesus exchanged places and appearances with Simon of Cyrene at the time of the crucifixion, so that Simon was the one who was actually crucified, not Jesus. As Simon (who appeared to be Jesus) was crucified, Jesus (who appeared to be Simon) stood by and laughed (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.4). Partly because of the comment on the suffering of Jesus mentioned above, Pearson doubts Irenaeus's account. He suggests that Basilides thought the divine Nous-Christ descended into the human Jesus, probably at his baptism, and returned to the Father at Jesus's crucifixion.[51] Thus only the human Jesus suffered, not the divine Nous-Christ. A similar view is presented in Revelation of Peter (NHC VII 81.3–83.15). Here Jesus interprets one of Peter's visions as a vision of the living Jesus smiling and laughing above the cross on which his fleshly part has been crucified. The reference in 2 Pet 2:1

48 See ἀποκαταστατικῆς in Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2.8 § 36.1; ἀποκατασταθήσεται in Hippolytus, *Haer.* 7.26.1–2; cf. ἀποκατάστασις in Revelation of Peter (NHC VII 74. 9).

49 Note, however, that no explicit statement of an anthropology according to which at least some humans are trapped sparks of divine light is attributed to Basilides. On the meaning of ἀποκατάστασις for Basilides, see Birger A. Pearson, "Basilides the Gnostic," in *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics,"* ed. Antti Marjanen and Petri Luomanen, VCSup 76 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 24; André Méhat, "ΑΠΟΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ chez Basilide," in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 365–73.

50 Pearson, "Basilides the Gnostic," 25.

51 Pearson, "Basilides the Gnostic," 23. Layton, however, seems to accept Irenaeus's account at face value ("The Significance of Basilides in Ancient Christian Thought," *Representations* 28 [1989]: 144–45).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

to the false teachers as denying the master who bought them might refer to this view. Basilides does not see the death of Jesus as a saving action, but rather as a consequence of sin. Second Peter seems to understand Jesus's death as the price he paid to buy his followers.

Other links between Basilides and the false teachers of 2 Peter include:

1. Some sources suggest a connection between Basilides and Peter. According to Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7.17 § 106.4, Basilides derived his teaching from Peter via Glaucias.[52] And the teaching of Basilides reported by Clement in *Strom.* 4.12 § 81.2–83.2 may be a comment on 1 Pet 4:12–19. Basilides may represent a Petrine tradition that 2 Peter considers false and tries to counter with the true teaching of Peter.
2. Basilides maintained that prophets came into being through the craftsmen of the world (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.5); cf. Revelation of Peter (NHC VII 71.6–9). The affirmation of prophecy in 2 Pet 1:19–2:10a, and especially in 1:20–21, might be intended to counter this.
3. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 24.5.2 says that Basilides referred to non-Gnostics as pigs and dogs (ὕες καὶ κύνες). Second Peter 2:22, which compares the followers of the false teachers and the false teachers themselves to a dog (κύων) and a sow (ὗς), might turn these epithets back against those who used them.
4. Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (*PG* 14:1015A–B), says that Basilides has related Rom 7:10 to irrelevant, blasphemous myths (*ineptas et impias fabulas*). These myths concern reincarnation as a human being after having been a domestic animal or bird, and perhaps include an account of the ultimate origin of the soul. This might be an example of the things in the letters of Paul that are hard to understand that the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction according to 2 Pet 3:15–16.

3 Conclusion

I have argued there is reason to think the author of 2 Peter had read the writings of Josephus and was influenced by them at several points. I have also argued there is reason to think the false teachers opposed by 2 Peter were Gnostics, most likely followers of Basilides. Dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus and the Gnostic identity of the false teachers are old scholarly proposals that do not presently receive much support. I have tried to show that these proposals still

52 Note, however, that Hippolytus, 7.20.1 says that Basilides derived his teaching from Jesus via Matthias.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

have merit. The specific suggestion that the false teachers were followers of Basilides is a more recent proposal that I have also argued has merit.

Dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus adds one more to the already long list of literary sources of 2 Peter. As is widely recognized, 2 Pet 2:1–3:3 makes extensive use of Jude. Second Peter 3:15–16 refers to the letters of Paul, and 2 Pet 3:1 probably refers to 1 Peter. In addition, 2 Peter mentions passages from a number of Old Testament writings—Genesis, Numbers, Isaiah, Proverbs and Psalms—and passages from the gospels of Matthew and John.[53] To this list Professor Frey has argued that we should add the *Apocalypse of Peter*; now I have argued that we should add Josephus.

Dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus and the idea that the false teachers it opposes were followers of Basilides have implications for the date of 2 Peter. If 2 Peter depends on Josephus, it must have been written after the date of Josephus's writings. These are usually considered to have been completed c. 100. If 2 Peter opposes followers of Basilides, it must have been written after Basilides began teaching. In *Strom.* 7.17 § 106.4, Clement of Alexandria says that Basilides arose during the reign of Hadrian (i.e., 118–38). Clement is arguing that heretical teachers like Basilides came after the time of the apostles so he has an interest in specifying a late date. However, opposing followers of Basilides probably requires that 2 Peter was written somewhat later than does dependence on Josephus. These implications for the date of 2 Peter are compatible with, and thus broadly supportive of, Professor Frey's argument that 2 Peter depends on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, written c. 130–35. However, dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter* clearly requires that it be written at a later date than does dependence on Josephus, and may require a later date than does opposing followers of Basilides.

Dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus and the idea that the false teachers it opposes were followers of Basilides also have implications for the place where 2 Peter was written. Dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus most strongly suggests composition of 2 Peter in Rome where Josephus lived and wrote; opposition to followers of Basilides most strongly suggests that 2 Peter was written in Alexandria where Basilides was active. The latter is supportive of Professor Frey's view that 2 Peter was written in Alexandria.

Although dependence of 2 Peter on Josephus might have been easiest if 2 Peter were written in Rome, there is some indication that Josephus's writings were rather widely dispersed and so could be used by those living outside of Rome. The earliest reference to Josephus seems to be found in a fragment of a

53 On this see Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor*, 15–18.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

lost writing of Irenaeus who wrote from Gaul in Greek about 180.[54] In this fragment Irenaeus mentions Josephus and paraphrases part of his account of the life of Moses found in *Ant.* 2.10. At about the same time (c. 169–83) Theophilus mentions Josephus in *Apology to Autolycus* 3.23 written in Greek in Antioch. Theophilus speaks of Josephus as having written about the Jewish war and says that Josephus gives information about the date of the law of Moses. Somewhat later Tertullian mentions Josephus in *Apology* 19 written from Carthage in Latin about 197. Tertullian speaks of Josephus as the vindicator of the ancient history of his people. About the same time Clement mentions Josephus in *Strom.* 1.21 § 147.2–4 written from Alexandria in Greek c. 198–203. He speaks of Josephus as composing a history of the Jews and presents a chronology drawn from Josephus's works.

Not much later, other Greek writers mention Josephus: Hippolytus (170–235) in a fragment of a commentary on Jeremiah and Ezekiel written in Rome;[55] and Origen in several passages including *Contra Celsum* 1.16 written in Caesarea c. 248.[56] Minucius Felix, a Latin writer living in Rome who died about 250, mentions Josephus in *Octavius* 33.

This suggests that Josephus was widely known and that use of his writings might have been possible in many different places, including Alexandria. Of course, this does not make Alexandria any more likely than Rome, Gaul, Antioch, Carthage or Caesarea as a place where the author of 2 Peter might have used Josephus. And on the other hand, the teaching of Basilides was known outside of Alexandria. Irenaeus in Gaul is obviously aware of it in 180. It is commonly supposed that Irenaeus depends on a lost writing of Justin (cf. *First Apology* 26). If so, this suggests knowledge of Basilides in Rome c. 150.

Bibliography

Abbott, Edwin A. "On the Second Epistle of Peter I. Had the Author Read Josephus?" *Expositor* 2/3 (1882): 49–63.

Adams, Edward. "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4." *NTS* 51 (2005): 106–22.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3713–52.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bigg, Charles. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*. ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901.

54 Fragment XXXII in *ANF* 1.573.

55 *ANF* 5.177.

56 Other passages: *Contra Celsum* 1.47; 4.11; *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* 10.17.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Callan, Terrance. *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014.

Caulley, Thomas Scott. "'They Promise Them Freedom': Once again, the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι in 2 Peter." *ZNW* 99 (2008): 129–38.

Davids, Peter H. *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. PNTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006.

Desjardins, Michel. "Introduction to VII,3: *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Coptic Gnostic Library: A Complete Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices Vol. 4: Nag Hammadi Codex VII*, edited by Birger A. Pearson, 201–16. Leiden: Brill, 1996.

Donelson, Lewis R. *I & II Peter and Jude*. NTL. Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2010.

Farrar, F.W. "Dr. Abbott on the Second Epistle of St. Peter." *Expositor* 2/3 (1882): 401–23.

Farrar, F.W. "The Second Epistle of St. Peter and Josephus." *Expositor* 3/8 (1888): 58–69.

Fillion, L. "Pierre (Deuxième Épitre de Saint)." In *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, 5: cols. 398–413. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1912.

Fornberg, Tord. *An Early Church in a Pluralistic Society: A Study of 2 Peter*. ConBNT 9. Lund: Gleerup, 1977.

Green, Gene L. *Jude & 2 Peter*. BECNT. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008.

Green, Michael. *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*. TNTC 18. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987.

Grundmann, Walter. *Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*. THKNT 15. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1974.

Harrington, Daniel J. "Jude and 2 Peter." In *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, by Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, 159–299. SP 15. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003.

Harvey, Robert, and Philip H. Towner. *2 Peter & Jude*. The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2009.

James, M.R. *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*. CGTSC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912.

Käsemann, Ernst. "An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology." In *Essays on New Testament Themes*. Trans. by W.M. Montague, 169–95. London: SCM, 1964.

Kelly, J.N.D. *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*. BNTC. London: Black, 1969.

King, Karen L. *What Is Gnosticism?* Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2003.

Knoch, Otto. *Der Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief. Der Judasbrief*. RNT. Regensburg: Pustet, 1990.

Layton, Bentley. *The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations and Introductions*. ABRL. New York: Doubleday, 1987.

Layton, Bentley. "The Significance of Basilides in Ancient Christian Thought." *Representations* 28 (1989): 135–51.

Mayor, Joseph B. *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*. London: Macmillan, 1907.

Méhat, André. "ΑΠΟΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ chez Basilide." In *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech*, 365–73. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Neyrey, Jerome H. "The Apologetic Use of the Transfiguration in 2 Peter 1:16–21." *CBQ* 42 (1980): 504–19.

Neyrey, Jerome H. "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter." *JBL* 99 (1980): 407–31.

Paulsen, Henning. *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief*. KEK 12/2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992.

Pearson, Birger A. *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.

Pearson, Birger A. "Basilides the Gnostic." In *A Companion to Second-Century Christian "Heretics,"* edited by Antti Marjanen and Petri Luomanen, 1–31. VCSup 76. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Pearson, Birger A. "The *Apocalypse of Peter* and Canonical 2 Peter." In *Gnosticism and the Early Christian World: In Honor of James M. Robinson*, 67–74. Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990.

Peel, Malcolm. "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament." *NovT* 12 (1970): 141–65.

Perkins, Pheme. *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude*. Interpretation. Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1995.

Pétrement, Simone. *A Separate God: The Christian Origins of Gnosticism*. Trans. by Carol Harrison. San Francisco: Harper, 1990.

Rudolph, Kurt. *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*. Trans. by R. McL. Wilson. San Francisco: Harper, 1987.

Salmon, George. *A Historical Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament*. London: Murray, 1889.

Schelkle, K.H. *Die Petrusbriefe, Der Judasbrief*. HTK 13/2. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1961.

Smith, Terrence V. *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity: Attitudes Toward Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries*. WUNT 2/15. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985.

Talbert, Charles H. "II Peter and the Delay of the Parousia." *VC* 20 (1966): 137–45.

Wand, J.W.C. *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*. London: Methuen, 1934.

Warfield, Benjamin B. "Dr. Edwin A. Abbott on the Genuineness of Second Peter." *Southern Presbyterian Review* 34 (1883): 390–445.

Werdermann, Hermann. *Die Irrlehrer des Judas- und 2. Petrusbriefes*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1913.

Williams, Michael Allen. *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Windisch, Hans. *Die katholischen Briefe*. Edited by Herbert Preisker. 3rd ed. HNT 15. Tübingen: Mohr, 1951.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 6

2 Peter, the Johannine Epistles, and the Authority of "Eyewitness" Apostolic Tradition

David R. Nienhuis

1 Introduction

I am deeply grateful to Jörg Frey for this stimulating contribution to the increasingly rich body of scholarship on 2 Peter. Despite the oft-repeated exhortation to read texts "on their own terms," it remains unavoidably the case that every writing emerges as one particular instantiation of a far larger communicative act involving innumerable literary and non-literary antecedents. As the great majority of these predecessor artifacts are lost to us, it is a cause for celebration whenever someone is able to re-arrange the available historical data in a manner that produces fresh and fruitful readings.

Wolfgang Grünstäudl's *Petrus Alexandrinus* has been a game-changer in this regard. While the literary parallels between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* have long been observed, reversing the order of dependence has had the effect of flooding light into aspects of the text that were formerly too shaded to allow for confident analysis. While it is certain that not everyone will embrace this alteration of historical priority, the "new perspective" it offers is rich indeed for a letter that has languished so long in the poverty of neglect.

It must be acknowledged, of course, that the modern neglect of 2 Peter was intensified, at least in part, by a previous scholarly overemphasis on a different literary relationship. The consensus reading of 2 Peter out of canonical sequence as *2 Jude* has muted the impact of this challenging text by treating it as merely derivative of a source text that was itself already widely neglected. I intend no complaint in saying this, for interpretive insight is welcome wherever it is to be found. But as one who self-identifies as an interpreter of scripture for the church, these "new perspectives" are received as most useful when they sharpen our capacity to read a biblical text in its actual canonical context, i.e. reading the second letter of Peter as Peter's second letter, one of a collection of seven letters known from antiquity as Catholic Epistles (CE).[1]

1 For more on the distinctive canonical witness of the CE, see e.g. Jacques Schlosser, ed., *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition* (BETL 176, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004); David R. Nienhuis, *Not by Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian*

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_007
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Professor Frey's initial questions of interest—"*What was the situation or particular challenge that necessitated such a polemical writing, with its particular author-construction and strategy? How could early Christian readers accept it? Can we obtain a key for an appropriate interpretation of this writing by developing a better understanding of its literary and historical context?*"[2]—are important for an analysis of any ancient Christian text, biblical or otherwise. But a canonical text asks interpreters to extend the range of historical questions to be asked. Namely, *how, why, and to what end was this text deemed a worthy addition to an emerging collection of NT letters?*

Indeed, it should be acknowledged from the outset that we only have this letter available to us to read today because it was received long ago to play an appointed role in an intentionally structured canonical collection. Such texts are never championed as authoritative on their own, but because of their capacity to bear hermeneutical fruit alongside other texts to which they are deliberately related. Consequently, students of a canonical text must reflect on the fact that 2 Peter was preserved within the CE collection without the *Apocalypse of Peter* as its interpretive companion.

No doubt some continue to view canonization as a late, deliberate act of subterfuge perpetrated by a powerful ecclesial leadership to provide a false covering of Christian unity over a highly contested history. This view cannot be sustained in the case of 2 Peter at least, for the evidence strongly suggests that, in this instance at least, composition and canonization were of a piece. It has long been argued that our author appears to have set himself to the task of "creating scripture" by "matching the status of already canonical epistles."[3] Identifying his letter as "the second" (3:1) resulted in the renaming of the existing authoritative letter of Peter as "the First." Frey's notion of a larger "Petrine Discourse" is immensely helpful here in that it enables us to strengthen the affirmation of intentionality behind this literary linkage: the author did not need to imitate the authorial voice of 1 Peter because the wide variety of Petrine "voices" in circulation made its different pitch far less discordant than it might sound to those of us whose Petrine library consists only of 1 and 2 Peter.

Canon (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007); Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall, eds., *The Catholic Epistles & Apostolic Tradition* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009); David R. Nienhuis and Robert W. Wall, *Reading the Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude as Scripture: The Shaping and Shape of a Canonical Collection* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013).

2 Page 9 in the present volume.

3 So Denis Farkasfalvy, "The Ecclesial Setting of Pseudepigraphy in Second Peter and its Role in the Formation of the Canon," *Second Century* 5 (1985): 23.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The sidelining of this complaint has the effect of increasing the volume of the many points of deliberate contact established between the two letters:[4] each is addressed from "Peter", and they share markedly similar greetings (1Pet.1:2; 2Pet.1:2) and closing doxologies (1Pet.4:11; 2Pet.3:18). Each letter also bears similar reference to the traditions of the disobedient angels (1Pet.3:19–20; 2Pet.2:4) and the flood (1Pet.3:20; 2Pet.2:5 and 3:6), and each speaks of prophecy in relation to scripture (1Pet.1:10–12; 2Pet.1:20–21 and 3:2).

In other places, linguistic connections provide a sense of development between the two letters. In the first, Peter says, "I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God" (5:12); in the second, Peter says, "This is now, beloved, the second letter I have written to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you" (3:1–2). 1 Peter is written to readers designated "the elect" (1:1), and 2 Peter follows this up by exhorting readers to "*confirm* their call and election" (1:10). 1 Peter says, "As *slaves* of God (ὡς θεοῦ δοῦλοι), live as *free* people (ὡς ἐλεύθεροι), yet do not use your *freedom* (ἐλευθερίαν) as a pretext for evil" (2:16). 2 Peter in turn condemns the false teachers because "they promise them *freedom* (ἐλευθερίαν) but they themselves are *slaves of corruption* (δοῦλοι… τῆς φθορᾶς, 2:19)." Likewise, where 1 Peter calls readers to imitate the Christ who is "like a lamb *without defect or blemish*" (ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου, 1:19), 2 Peter condemns the false teachers as "*defects and blemishes*" (σπίλοι καὶ μῶμοι, 2:13) and reminds readers to hold fast so that they may be found by Christ "*without defect or blemish*" (ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι, 3:14).

All this is to say that there is ample evidence in support of the notion that the author of 2 Peter composed his letter as a companion piece for the authoritative letter of Peter that was already in circulation. Since 2 Peter also invited readers to consider its message in relation to an existing collection of authoritative Pauline letters (3:15–18), we are justified in affirming—with many others—that 2 Peter reveals a highly developed "canon consciousness" of proto-canonical NT letters.[5]

The late date required for our acceptance of the Grünstädl/Frey thesis, however, invites us to consider further possibilities. 2 Peter eventually found its home in a collection of letters called "Catholic Epistles" (hereafter "CE"). This collection formalized the relationship between the two Petrine letters by

4 For a full accounting of the lexical agreements between 1 and 2 Peter, see John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 37B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 27, 141..

5 With Farkasfalvy, see also: G.H. Boobyer, "The Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter," in *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of T.W. Manson*, ed. A. Higgins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 34–53; Robert W. Wall, "The Canonical Function of 2 Peter," *Biblical Interpretation* 9 (2001): 64–81; Nienhuis and Wall, *Reading*, 95–157.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

placing them side by side, but also *diminished* the relationship between 2 Peter and one of its primary source texts—Jude—by interposing the Letters of John between them. Since there is ample evidence to support the widespread availability of 1 John (and perhaps all three letters of John) by the middle of the second century,[6] we must entertain the possibility that the author of 2 Peter knew these letters as well.

Critical orthodoxy has long taken it for granted that 1–3 John's theological and linguistic differences from the other CE are indicative of the apparently *ad hoc* nature of the collection as a whole. On this assumption a dismantling of the collection has seemed justified: the vast majority now remove 1–3 John to read them alongside the Gospel of John (and perhaps the Apocalypse as well) as part of an alternative canonical arrangement called "Johannine Literature." While some have tried to take the canonical shape seriously by reading 1–3 John as part of the whole CE,[7] most continue to treat the Johannines as completely unrelated to 2 Peter, despite the fact that they stand shoulder to shoulder in canonical sequence. Is their relationship entirely inconsequential, or might we discern some intentionality here on the part of our second-century author?

Stated plainly: is it possible that the author of 2 Peter wrote not only to link his text with 1 Peter, but also with the letters of John which eventually came to follow it in canonical sequence? And if this can be shown to be plausible, what light is shed on Frey's proposed situation behind its composition—that 2 Peter was written, in part, to correct the eschatological perspective of the *Apocalypse of Peter*?

2 Literary Linkages between 2 Peter and the Johannine Letters

James Nogalski has recently argued that the book of Joel functions as a "literary anchor" which unifies major literary threads in the twelve Minor Prophets.[8] Joel accomplishes this unification by dovetailing genres and repeating words,

6 Eusebius insists in his *Church History* that Papias knew 1 John (3.39.16); it seems certain that Polycarp knew it as well (*Phil.* 7.1), as did Justin (*Dial.* 123.9) and the *Epistle to Diognetus* 10.2–3; 11.4. That it was known by the end of the 2nd century to Irenaeus in the west and Clement in the east there is no doubt. As for 2–3 John's association with 1 John, see Judith Lieu, *The 2nd and 3rd Epistles of John: History and Background* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), and Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

7 Recent attempts to read the Johannine epistles as CE can be found in R. Wall's "A Unifying Theology of the Catholic Epistles" and J. Painter's "The Johannine Epistles as Catholic Epistles", both found in Niebuhr and Wall, *Catholic Epistles*, 13–40 and 457–463, respectively.

8 J. Nogalski, "Joel as Literary Anchor for the Book of the Twelve," *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, eds. J. Nogalski and M.A. Sweeney, SBLSS 15 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2000), 91–109.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

images and phrases in such a way that the literary coherence of the book of the twelve is strengthened. In similar fashion David Trobisch has described 2 Peter as a later "editorial note" to readers of the canonical text, one of many such NT texts included for their capacity to furnish readers with literary signals that bind texts together in order to strengthen the coherence of the final form of the canon.[9] I wish to explore the possibility that 2 Peter performs much the same function in relation to the Johannine letters. Is it possible that the eventual acceptance of the letter was encouraged by the manner in which 2 Peter enables readers to link the Petrine Discourse to the Johannine, thereby creating a more stable and coherent CE collection? Such questions call for a closer examination of the more significant literary relationships between the letters, which are enumerated as follows.

(1) We begin by noting how a series of verbal links between 2 Peter and the Johannine letters target a shared problem: the epistemological crisis believers suffer when facing alternative theological visions promulgated by Christian teachers who deny something the authors deem critical to Christian discipleship. It is extremely noteworthy in this regard that both 2 Peter and 1 John describe their opponents as ψευδοπροφήτης, a term which occurs in the NT letters only at 2 Peter 2.1 and 1 John 4.1.[10]

The double appearance of this word here at the end of the biblical plotline heightens the drama of the unfolding canonical story. The NT begins with Jesus warning of false prophets who will lead people astray.[11] Following this we hear nothing of false prophets throughout the Pauline witness. 2 Peter then announces its intention to "remind" readers of apostolic teaching (1:12; 3:1), echoing the gospels by warning of false prophets who are coming (2:1), and cautioning believers of those who misinterpret Paul's letters to their own destruction (3:15–16). This narrative is then advanced when 1 John announces that false prophets are now at work in the world (4:1), and this, in turn, prepares the way for the Apocalypse, where

9 David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

10 On the identity of the opponents in 2 Peter, see the classic treatments in Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 154–57, and Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter," *JBL* 99 (1980): 407–31. More recently, see Peter H. Davids, "Are the Others too Other? The Issue of 'Others' in Jude and 2 Peter," in *Reading 1–2 Peter and Jude: A Resource for Students*, ed. E.F. Mason and T.W. Martin (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2014), 201–13. For recent viewpoints on the identity of the opponents in 1–3 John, see the helpful discussions by John Painter, *1, 2, and 3 John*, SP 18 (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 88–94, and especially Judith Lieu, *I, II, & III John*, NTL (Louisville, KY: WJK, 2008), 9–14.

11 Matt. 7.15; 24.11, 24; Mk.13:22; Lk.6:26.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

a false prophet re-emerges in a starring role.[12] 2 Peter's re-introduction of the theme thus helps to anchor 1 John within the CE, for without it, readers would be more likely to associate the false prophet reference in 1 John directly with its prominence in the Apocalypse.

(2) 2 Peter identifies these false prophets as *false teachers* (2:1). So also in the Johannine letters: after the author of 1 John reminds his readers, "You do not need anyone to teach you" (2:27), 2 John insists, "Everyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God; whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. Do not receive into the house or welcome anyone who comes to you and does not bring this teaching" (9–10).[13]

(3) These teachers are identified by the fact that they *deny* something important about Jesus (2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 2:22–23). Αρνέομαι and ἀπαρνέομαι occur twenty-nine times in the Gospels and Acts. In Paul it is found frequently in the Pastorals.[14] The verb also occurs once at Hebrews 11:24, and twice in Revelation (2:13; 3:8) where believers are praised for not denying their faith. Amongst all these it is noteworthy that the occurrences in our letters are rather similar:

> *2Pet. 2:1* καὶ τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι
>
> *1Jn. 2:22* τίς ἐστιν ὁ ψεύστης εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀρνούμενος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ χριστός;

Each describes (1) a deceiving opponent who (2) commits the action of denial (3) in relation to a particular Christological claim.

(4) The teachers are described as *deceivers* who have strayed from truth into *error.* Of the thirty occurrences of the πλανάω word group in the NT letters, around a third are found together in 2 Peter and 1–2 John.[15] Hearing this verb repeated here in association with "false prophets" inevitably brings to mind Christ's warning in Matthew's gospel that "false prophets will arise and lead many astray (πλανήσουσιν)" (Mt. 24:11, 24), which itself develops a point from earlier in Matthew: "Beware of false prophets … you will know them by their fruits" (Mt. 7:15–16). The letters thus recall

12 13.11–18; 16.13; 19.20; 20.10.

13 The notion that 2 John describes official visits by foreign teachers is assumed by commentators. So Lieu, *I, II, & III John*, 260: "The elder is clearly not envisaging merely a casual visitor. It could be a member of a group with a different interpretation of the Christian message … whose mere presence in the enclosed circle of the elected spelled danger, but it is more likely that it is someone expressly seeking actively to share their teaching."

14 1 Tim. 5.8; 2 Tim. 2.12, 13; 3.5; Titus 1.16; 2.12.

15 2Pet.2:15, 18; 3:17; 1Jn.1:8; 2:26; 3:7; 4:6; 2Jn.7. Note also the close synonym πλαστός in 2Pet.2:3.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Jesus' words that false prophet-teachers will present teaching that results in a distortion of Christian ethics: according to 2 Peter it is not Christ's *name* but Christ's *lordship* that is rejected (2:1); it is the "*way* of truth" that is being denied (2:3); these false prophets "have left the straight *road*" (2:15), have turned back from the commandments and don't walk in the "*way* of righteousness" (2:21). This prepares the way for 1–3 John's extended articulation of what it is to "walk" in the way of Christ's commandments as taught by one who witnessed his deeds and heard his words.[16]

(5) A distinctive feature of the CE collection as a whole is its emphasis on the importance of Jesus' life and teaching and not simply his death, resurrection, and return as they are so strongly emphasized in the Pauline witness. In the CE, Jesus is a faithful subject, one who not only died and rose again but also taught the way of truth "that we might follow in his steps" (1Pet. 2:21), for those who claim to abide in Christ "ought to walk just as he walked" (1Jn. 2:6).[17]

1 Peter grounds Peter's authority in his being a "*witness* (μάρτυς) to the sufferings of Christ" (5:1). 2 Peter subsequently makes this the centrepiece of its authoritative claims: the apostles "did not follow cleverly devised myths" when they declared the parousia of the Lord, "for we were *eyewitnesses* (ἐπόπτης) of his majesty" (1:16) who "heard" God's voice on the holy mountain (1:18). The only ones capable of reminding believers of the Lord's commandments (3:1–2) are those who actually witnessed his life. So also the author of 1 John begins his letter by underscoring the authority of his eyewitness status:

> We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—this life was revealed, and we have seen it … we declare to you what we have seen and heard (1 Jn.1:1–3).

Both letters thus begin on the same terms by firmly grounding their authoritative claims in their status as witnesses to the pre-Easter Jesus.

(6) Along similar lines, 2 Peter is explicitly *written* (3:1) to readers of 1 Peter to warn against scoffers who will come saying "where is the *promise* (ἐπαγγελία) of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were *from the beginning* (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) of creation" (3:3–4).

16 1 John 1.6, 7; 2.6, 11; 2 John 4, 6; 3 John 3, 4.

17 The importance of eyewitness testimony in the ancient world has been explored in Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Peter directs his readers to the "*word* of God" through which all things were created and by which judgment will soon come (3:5–7).

Soon after these closing words 1 John opens by insisting it was *written* (1:4) to *declare* (ἀπαγγέλλομεν) "that which was *from the beginning*" (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) "concerning the *word* of life" (1.1). The construction ἀπ' ἀρχῆς occurs twenty times in the New Testament: nine in the Gospels and Acts, ten times in 1–2 John, and in just one other place—2 Peter 3:4. As with the term ψευδοπροφήτης, so also with ἀπ' ἀρχῆς: the only occurrences in the NT letters are in 2 Peter and 1–2 John. 2 Peter's opponents reject the ἐπαγγελία because of differing conceptions of what is ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, so the author counters by appeal to the activity of the Word of God. 1 John opens immediately thereafter with an ἀπαγγελία of what was ἀπ' ἀρχῆς concerning the Word of God—a claim the author justifies on the basis of his eyewitness experience.

One is reminded of the theme as it unfolds in the Gospel of John:[18]

> Jn.1:1–2—In the beginning (Ἐν ἀρχῇ) was the Word … he was in the beginning (ἐν ἀρχῇ) with God.
>
> Jn.15:27—You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς).
>
> Jn.16:4–5—I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them. I did not say these things to you from the beginning (ἐξ ἀρχῆς) …

Then there is Luke's opening dedication and statement of intent, which finds the author predicating his authority on the fact that his information came from "those who *from the beginning* (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) were *eyewitnesses* and servants of the *word*" (1:2). This emphasis on eyewitness testimony re-emerges at the beginning of Acts, when Peter describes the qualified replacement for Judas as "one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day he was taken up from us" (Acts 1:21–22). The preeminent eyewitness figures in Acts are Peter and John,[19] who stand side by side throughout the first eight chapters of the narrative just as their letters do now in canonical sequence.

18 See Ed L. Miller, "In the Beginning: A Christological Transparency," *NTS* 45 (1999): 587–92, which describes ἀρχή as a Christologically-charged Johannine word. He analyzes its use in most every NT occurrence *except for* the one in 2Pet.

19 The two are listed as a unit on ten separate occasions in the portion of the story taking place in Jerusalem (1:13–3:1, 3; 4:1, 13, 19; 8:14, 17, 25).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(7) Students of the Gospel of John will know how frequently one finds the verb τηρέω in the Farewell Discourse. Over half of all the NT occurrences are in John (36 times), and a third of those are found in chs.14–17 (e.g. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments," Jn.14:15).[20] This thematic is picked up in 1 John:

> Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we *keep* his commandments. Whoever says, "I have come to know him," but does not *keep* his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; but whoever *keeps* his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection." (1 Jn. 2:3–5; cf. 3:22–24; 5:3, 18).

Before we read 1 John, however, we pass through 2 Peter. There we find the theme of keeping and being kept employed frequently, but as a term of judgment: angels are *kept* in chains (2.4), and the unrighteous are *kept* under punishment (2:9; cf. 2:17; 3:7).

2 Peter insists that there are those who do not *keep* God's commands and are kept by God for judgment and destruction; 1 John, in turn, reminds believers of the call to *keep* the commandments as proof that they abide with God. The series continues with Jude, who repeats 2 Peter's images of those who oppose God being *kept* for judgment (Jude 6, 13), and is brought to completion in the Apocalypse by the Dragon who makes war on "those who *keep* the commandments of God" (Rev.12.17).

(8) Τηρέω is a synonym for φυλάσσω. The former is more common in the NT and the latter in the LXX, where it occurs frequently in admonitions that God's people must obey the law and guard against the idolatries that will lead them astray. Strikingly, 2 Peter and 1 John both conclude their letters with final admonitions using this verb in the imperative: 2 Peter says, "Beware (φυλάσσεσθε) that you are not carried away with the error of the lawless" (3:17); 1 John ends, "Little children, keep (φυλάξατε) yourselves from idols" (5:21). This "keep or be kept" motif culminates in Jude, the last letter of the CE collection, whose famous ending encourages believers to "keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jd. 21) because God alone is the one "who is able to keep you from falling" (Jd. 24).

20 Others have already noted the verbal connections between the Letters of John and the Farewell Discourse of John 14–17. See especially David M. Reis, "Jesus' Farewell Discourse, 'Otherness,' and the Construction of a Johannine Identity," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 32 (2003): 239–58.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3 Conclusion: 2 Peter, the Johannine Letters, and the Formation of the NT Canon

Professor Frey has shown that 2 Peter was written, at least in part, to obviate the damage created by the eschatological expectation promoted in the widely authoritative *Apocalypse of Peter*. The testament genre was chosen for the letter

> … so that Peter himself can 'authentically' interpret the message he had received from the risen Jesus concerning his martyrdom and correct the dangerously naïve connection of his own death with the beginning of the eschatological fulfilment and the end of the evil powers. In this manner—without the aspects so easily criticized by rivalling teachers—he can confirm both the truth of the eschatological promise and the faithfulness of God and his prophetic word. He can proclaim Christ's authority to judge and to save—a message that is indispensable for the ethical exhortation the author wants his readers to keep in mind.[21]

But more must be said: what 2 Peter does, in fact, is solve the problem by stridently reorienting readers back to the apostolic tradition shared by all those who walked with Jesus "from the beginning"—including especially the apostle John, one of Jesus' three inner circle disciples in the gospels, and thereafter, Peter's right hand man in the Acts narrative. Indeed, the only time John speaks in the Acts of the Apostles is when he and Peter respond to their persecutors by saying, "We cannot keep from speaking about *what we have seen and heard*" (Acts 4.19; 1Jn.1:1–3). In the Acts as well as in their respective letters, Peter and John are presented as eyewitnesses *par excellence*.

2 Peter thus does more than simply correct a misguided eschatology by rejecting attempts at dating the eschaton. If our analysis of the linkages are correct, it appears he has also written with the intent to link arms with 1 Peter and the Johannine epistles to emphasize the priority of *looking back* to the authoritative apostolic paradosis over *looking forward* to the parousia on the basis of revelatory visions. Doing so had the effect of linking the Petrine and Johannine discourses in order to increase the coherence of their joint epistolary proclamation.

This also helps us expand our understanding of why the author ends the letter by warning readers to be careful when interpreting Paul. Frey is quite right to end his study by highlighting "the distance to Paul and his situation" evident

21 Page 24 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

in this letter;[22] by the second century, Paul seems to have been but one of many Christian leaders claiming to have received his message δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal.1:12). Our author's reference to Paul's having written "according to the wisdom given him" in all likelihood speaks not of Paul's eschatological understanding, but to the gift of his revelatory knowledge received οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal.1:1).[23] Paul's epistemology of faith is personal, experiential, and unmediated; the problems of authority this model caused for later Christianity is clearly reflected in the later NT letters, where believers are warned of "teachers" with variant doctrines who threaten Christian unity.[24] Hence, as Frey notes, "faith" in these later texts describes "both faith and belief, the relationship and loyalty to Christ, the adherence to a certain body of teaching, and—most distinctively—the aspect of ethical conduct."[25] This is also very much the case in 1 John, where πίστις occurs only once (5:4) and is correlated rather generally with communally shared doctrinal confession and obedience to commandments, especially the command to love siblings in the faith (cf. 5:1–12).

In this post-Pauline setting, believers could only know which expressions of the Gospel were faithful by testing them against the rule of faith passed down from those who were with Jesus "from the beginning." Paul himself had to do this, checking his proclamation against that of the eyewitnesses, the "acknowledged pillars" of Jerusalem (Gal.2:9), to make sure that he had not run in vain (Gal.2:2). In borrowing from Jude, and linking his letter literarily to 1 Peter and the letters of John, the author of 2 Peter sought to place a similar check on our reading of the Pauline letter collection and, by extension, all those (including sceptical readers of *the Apocalypse of Peter*) whose doctrinal speculation would put them out of step with "the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles" (2Pet.3:2).

Bibliography

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006.

22 Page 62 in the current volume.

23 *Dotheīsan* is a divine passive with God as the implied agent. See e.g. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 329. See also the excellent study by Mary Healy, "Knowledge of the Mystery: A Study of Pauline Epistemology," in *The Bible and Epistemology: Biblical Soundings on the Knowledge of God*, ed. M. Healy and R. Perry (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), 134–58.

24 Apart from the witnesses of 2 Peter and 1–3 John, see 1Tim.1:7; 2Tim.4:3; Jas.3:1; Jd.4.

25 Page 53 in the current volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Boobyer, G.H. "The Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter." In *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of T.W. Manson*, edited by A. Higgins, 34–53. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959.

Davids, Peter H. "Are the Others Too Other? The Issue of 'Others' in Jude and 2 Peter." In *Reading 1–2 Peter and Jude: A Resource for Students*, edited by E.F. Mason and T.W. Martin, 201–13. Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2014.

Elliott, John H. *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 37B. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Farkasfalvy, Denis. "The Ecclesial Setting of Pseudepigraphy in Second Peter and its Role in the Formation of the Canon." *Second Century* 5 (1985): 3–29.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Healy, Mary. "Knowledge of the Mystery: A Study of Pauline Epistemology." In *The Bible and Epistemology: Biblical Soundings on the Knowledge of God*, edited by M. Healy and R. Perry, 134–58. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007.

Hill, Charles E. *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Lieu, Judith. *The 2nd and 3rd Epistles of John: History and Background*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986.

Lieu, Judith. *I, II, & III John*. NTL. Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2008.

Miller, Ed L. "In the Beginning: A Christological Transparency." *NTS* 45 (1999): 587–92.

Neyrey, Jerome H. "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter." *JBL* 99 (1980): 407–31.

Niebuhr, Karl-Wilhelm and Robert W. Wall, eds. *The Catholic Epistles & Apostolic Tradition*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Nienhuis, David R. *Not by Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2007.

Nienhuis, David R. and Robert W. Wall, *Reading the Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude as Scripture: The Shaping and Shape of a Canonical Collection*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.

Nogalski, James. "Joel as Literary Anchor for the Book of the Twelve." In *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, edited by J. Nogalski and M.A. Sweeney, 91–109. SBLSS 15. Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2000.

Painter, John. *1, 2, and 3 John*. SP 18. Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 2002.

Painter, John. "The Johannine Epistles as Catholic Epistles." In *The Catholic Epistles & Apostolic Tradition*, edited by K.-W. Niebuhr and R.W. Wall, 457–63. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Reis, David M. "Jesus' Farewell Discourse, "Otherness," and the Construction of a Johannine Identity." *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 32 (2003): 239–58.

Schlosser, Jacques, ed. *The Catholic Epistles and the Tradition*. BETL 176. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004.

Trobisch, David. *The First Edition of the New Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Wall, Robert W. "The Canonical Function of 2 Peter." *Biblical Interpretation* 9 (2001): 64–81.

Wall, Robert W. "A Unifying Theology of the Catholic Epistles." In *The Catholic Epistles & Apostolic Tradition*, edited by K.-W. Niebuhr and R.W. Wall, 13–40. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 7

Reading 2 Peter 3 in the Light of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Sibylline Oracles*

Jeremy Hultin

It is a tremendous honor to be included among the respondents to Jörg Frey's Radboud Prestige Lectures. Frey's work is refreshingly bold and original, carefully argued, and full of insights from his extensive knowledge of the scholarly literature. I owe a great debt to Frey for this and his many other publications on 2 Peter (and Jude), which have greatly shaped my own understanding. Even on topics where Frey argues for a view toward which I was already inclined (e.g. the late date of 2 Peter), I have found my own convictions strengthened by Frey's thoroughness and wealth of references. Naturally, I also remain unpersuaded by some of Frey's claims. In this essay I will engage primarily with one of Frey's most exegetically ambitious proposals, namely, his claim that 2 Peter's use of the *Apocalypse of Peter* holds a key to a new way to interpret 2 Peter 3. I agree with Frey (and others) that the author of 2 Peter knew the *Apocalypse of Peter*. But I am not persuaded by Frey's explanation of *how* 2 Peter drew on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, or how we might best use the *Apocalypse of Peter* to shed light on 2 Peter 3.

1 *Apocalypse of Peter*'s Promise about the Effects of Peter's Martyrdom

Frey argues that a text of central importance for understanding 2 Pet 3:4–13 is *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4, where Christ "promises" to Peter that Peter must "drink the promised cup" *so that* "the destruction of the kingdom of the son of the one who is in Hades may begin."[1] Frey argues that the "scoffers" of 2 Pet 3:4 appealed

1 Translations of the Greek remains of the *Apocalypse of Peter* are my own, based on the texts in Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004). Translations of the Ethiopic are taken from Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988).

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_008
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

to the failure of *this* promise, and 2 Pet 3:5–13 constitute a response that aimed to avoid "connecting the eschatological events with Peter's death."[2]

I find this unpersuasive for two main reasons. First, this seems vastly to overestimate the crisis precipitated by this one saying. I am not aware of any other evidence that early Christians were troubled by the failure of Peter's death to precipitate the demise of Roman rule.[3] To my knowledge, there is nothing corresponding to this passage in the apocalyptic texts that we know *drew upon* the *Apoc. Pet.*, nor do any of the Christian authors who knew and quoted the *Apoc. Pet.* mention it.[4] Indeed, one might further emphasize just how little an impression *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4 seems to have made by considering one *non*-Christian who was familiar with *Apoc. Pet.*, namely, the "Hellene" quoted at such length in Macarius Magnes's *Apocriticus*.[5] This critic of Christianity was well enough acquainted with the *Apoc. Pet.* to quote it twice in his attack on Christian eschatology (I discuss both passages below). We might have expected him to seize upon *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4, as well, for he delights in pointing out the failure of the Christians' eschatological expectations,[6] and he knows about

2 Frey writes: "Whereas the 'scoffers' could refer to the time that had already passed since the death of Peter without any promises being fulfilled, the author contests their views by composing a 'Testament of Peter,' which gives an ultimate explanation but avoids connecting the eschatological events with Peter's death" (p. 20 in the present volume).

3 It is also worth noting that, while the vocabulary of "promise" runs through *Apoc. Pet.* 14:1–6 (Rainer ends at 14:5), there is a significant shift in the *content* of the promises between 14:1–3 and 14:4, which Frey does not mention. In *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–3, the "promise" that Christ fulfills is granting entry into his eternal kingdom (entry either to his elect [so the Ethiopic], or to *sinners* at the *request* of his elect [so Rainer, supported by *Sib. Or.* 2.330–38). In *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4, the subject changes to Peter's death, and the language of "promise" is found in Rainer, but is strangely absent from the Ethiopic. The "promise" in 14:5 (E and R) occurs in a textually and syntactically obscure phrase (see Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 356; and M.R. James, "The Rainer Fragment of the Apocalypse of Peter," *JTS* 32 [1931]: 274); 14:6 exists only in E.

4 It is possible that Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 2.5–8 draws on *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4 (so Richard J. Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 250–51). But if this is the case, we should note that so far from trying to account for the *failure* of Peter's death to bring about the destruction (ἀφάνεια) of Nero, Lactantius's point is that *as a direct consequence* of Nero's execution of Peter (and Paul), God punished Nero: "For this [Nero] did not go unpunished; God took note of the way in which His people were troubled. Cast down from the pinnacle of power and hurtled from the heights, the tyrant, powerless, suddenly *disappeared* [*nusquam repente comparuit*]; not even a place of burial was to be seen on the earth for so evil a beast."

5 For a recent survey of the debates about the identity of the "Hellene," see Jeremy M. Schott and M.J. Edwards, *Macarius*, Apocriticus, Translated Texts for Historians 62 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 28–40.

6 Two examples will suffice. In *Apocrit.* 4.2.5, the Hellene cites 1 Thess 4:15–17 and notes: "it has been three hundred years since [Paul] said this, and nothing anywhere—not even Paul himself—has been 'taken up' with other bodies" (trans. Schott and Edwards, adjusted). In

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Peter's martyrdom, and mentions it twice to illustrate the failure of Christ's words to his chief apostle.[7] Yet the Helllene makes no mention of *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4. Naturally, this is only an argument from silence,[8] but it is a silence consistent with our other sources. Taken together, this leads one to conclude that the promise contained in *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4 simply was not a source of Christian angst or of skeptics' taunts.

Second, Frey's proposal seems to fail in its details. How would readers of 2 Pet 3:4 detect a reference to *Peter's* death in the phrase ἀφ᾽ ἧς γὰρ οἱ πατέρες ἐκοιμήθησαν, πάντα οὕτως διαμένει ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως?[9] Furthermore, if the mockers' point was that the "destruction" of Nero and all he stood for had not commenced upon Peter's martyrdom, then 2 Peter 3:5–13 seems like a singularly opaque and unhelpful response. There is nothing in these verses about Roman rule, much less any allusion to the Nero-as-antichrist traditions implicit in *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4. More importantly, 2 Pet 3:5–13 says nothing about how *the death of martyrs* might (or might not) precipitate the end of Roman hegemony, nor about the apocalyptic speculations that the eschaton could not arrive until Roman rule dissolved. The *absence* of these topics in 2 Peter 3 is all the more telling when we recall that both of them—the link between martyrdoms and

Apocrit. 4.3.1, he cites Matt 24:14, and notes that the gospel is now current in "every street" unto the ends of the earth, yet "the end is nowhere; nor will it ever come!" (τὸ τέλος οὐδαμοῦ, οὐδ᾽ ἥξει ποτέ).

7 The Hellene presents the martyrdoms of both Peter and Paul as failures of Christ's (Peter) and God's (Paul) promises to them. (For his treatment of Paul's martyrdom, *see Apocrit.* 4.4.1, citing the failure of Acts 18:9–10.) The passages the Hellene cites to illustrate Christ's failed promises to Peter are John 21:15 and Matt 16:18, not *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4. He notes that Peter was given the authority to "feed the sheep" (John 21:15), but instead of being able to do so, he "was tortured, when nailed to the Cross" (*Apocrit.* 4.4.2). Similarly at *Apocrit.* 3.22.3, he says: "For all that, it is recorded that, after tending the sheep for only a few months, Peter was crucified, although Jesus had said the gates of Hades would not prevail against him" (Matt 16:18).

(In a more general taunt redolent of 2 Pet 3:4, the Hellene criticizes the cruelty of the Christian God for allowing people to be "punished inhumanely … when the *expected resurrection and 'coming' are nowhere to be seen*" (τῆς προσδοκωμένης ἀναστάσεως καὶ ἐλεύσεως οὔσης ἀδήλου, *Apocrit.* 4.4.3).

8 An argument all the weaker since there is no way to know how much of the *Apoc. Pet.* the Hellene knew, or how the version available to him differed from those available to us.

9 I take ἀφ᾽ ἧς simply to mean "since" (BDAG s.v. ἀπό 2.b.γ), and see no reason to look for an antecedent. The expression ἀφ᾽ ἧς (*sc.* ὥρας or ἡμέρας) was common enough (cf. 1 Macc 1:11; Luke 7:45; Acts 24:11), and meant the same thing as ἀφ᾽ οὗ (cf. ἕως οὗ in 2 Pet 1:19). The reference to the death of "the fathers" (οἱ πατέρες) would not naturally call to mind recent deaths of Peter or other Christian leaders.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

God's judgment,[10] and the link between Roman rule and the eschaton[11]—*were* topics of great interest to ancient Christians. This absence further suggests that 2 Peter was not written to deal with disappointment about *Apoc. Pet.* 14.4.

What 2 Pet 3:5–13 *does* discuss is the fiery dissolution of "the heavens," "earth," "the world," "the elements," and "all things"—in short, the destruction of the whole "creation" (κτίσις) whose stability the scoffers cite in their taunt (3:4b). Furthermore, the scoffers' observation about the steady state of all things "from the *beginning* of *creation*" sounds like a skepticism born from reflection on the *longue durée* far more than one arising from some short-term disappointment about the delay of Christ's second coming, or the failure of Peter's death to bring down Rome.

Rather than seeing the failed "promise" of 2 Pet 3:4 as a reference to Peter's death, we should read it closely with the "promise" of the new heavens and earth (3:13). I concur with Adams that these are but two aspects of a *single* grand promise that at the end of history God would "come," and with his coming, the world would be radically disrupted and renewed.[12] *That* "promise" was very widely discussed and debated, because it was found so prominently in scripture;[13] because it was open to diverse interpretations; and because it elicited both frank incredulity and searching criticisms. Thus the taunt in 2 Pet 3:4 has two related claims: not only has God (or Christ)[14] failed to "come"

10 Cf. Rev 6:9–11, with the martyrs' plaintive cry, "How long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?" In fact, the parable of the fig tree in *Apoc. Pet.* 2 addresses precisely this question: *Apoc. Pet.* 2.1 (E): as soon as the fig tree sprouts, "then will be the *end of the world*." This "sprouting" is defined as martyrdoms in Israel (*Apoc. Pet.* 2.11). Thus *Apoc. Pet.* 2, along with 14.4, confirm that martyrdom is connected to eschatology in this text. The problem for Frey's thesis is that, unlike *Apoc. Pet.* 2 or 14.4, 2 Pet 3:5–13 simply does not engage with this topic.

11 2 Thess 2:6–7 as read by several early interpreters. In a different way, Hippolytus makes the same point in *Comm. Dan.* 4 and *De antichristo*: the end cannot come so long as Rome still holds power.

12 Edward Adams, "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4," *NTS* 51 (2005): 109–11.

13 Isa 65:17; 66:22 are only the most obvious examples; Frey notes many more.

14 I do not see evidence that 2 Peter cared to draw a sharp distinction here. Obviously, the many HB and Jewish passages that use the expression "his coming" mean *God's* "coming" (Mal 3:2; Sir 16:18; *2 En.* 32.1; *L.A.B.* 3.12–13; *T. Jud.* 22.2 [ἕως παρουσίας τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δικαιοσύνης]). Note especially *T. Mos.* 10.12, where *usque ad adventum illius* corresponds precisely to 2 Pet 3:4's phrase ἕως τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, and where God's *adventus* is reckoned in relation to the time Moses "*slept*" with his "*fathers*" (*T. Mos.* 10.12, 14).

Even in Christian texts, the phrase "his *parousia*" sometimes refers to the coming of God rather than Christ: Herm. *Sim.* 5.5.3 [58.3]: "the time that remains until his [sc. God's] coming [τὴν παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ]." And of course in *Apoc. Pet.* (Akhmim 3), Jesus says "then *God* will come," τότε ἐλεύσεται ὁ θ(εό)ς.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

as promised (3:4a), but in fact, the steady stability of all things "from the beginning of creation" (3:4b) makes it very hard to believe that there ever would be any such radical, disruptive arrival of the deity.

If that is the focus of the scoffers' taunt, then 2 Pet 3:5–13 offers a cogent response. After all, aside from 2 Pet 3:8–9, nothing in 2 Peter's response pertains to a "delay" of any kind—and certainly not a delay of the fall of Rome.[15] Rather, the bulk of 2 Peter's response aims to demonstrate the plausibility of the claim that "all these things" (3:11) could indeed be cataclysmically undone, that there was nothing *impious* or *absurd* in the assertion that even the heavens and the earth—the perfect works of God's own hands—would be destroyed and replaced.

I would now like to flesh out an interpretation of 2 Peter 3 in conversation with the proposals of Frey. Although my construal will differ from his, I hope to draw attention to several of the ways that his fresh insights have contributed to my exegesis of the passage as a whole. As point of departure, I want to build on Frey's claim that the depiction of the conflagration in *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5 contributes to our understanding of 2 Peter 3. In fact, I believe there are two main ways the *Apoc. Pet.* can illuminate 2 Peter 3.

The first way I suggest we might use *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5 and its effective history to inform an interpretation of 2 Peter 3, is by listening to the scandalized and incredulous reaction of an actual reader of the *Apoc. Pet.*, namely, the anonymous "Hellene" quoted by Macarius Magnes. Since 2 Pet 3:5–13 responds to a skeptical slogan, it is helpful to hear some skeptics speak for themselves. As we will see, the Hellene regarded the eschatology of *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5 as equal

---

Many Christian texts fail to distinguish clearly between the "kingdom" or "day" or "coming" of God or of Christ (e.g. *2 Clem.* 12.1–2; 17.4; cf. *Sib. Or.* 8.217–50, where the acrostic meant to depict the coming of "Jesus the Son" actually describes that of "God, the Most High"). In *Ep. Apost.* 17, the apostles actually tell Jesus that they are confused about the topic, since they have heard both about *Christ's* coming and about *God's* coming. Jesus gives them a harmonizing answer: since Christ and the Father are one, the coming of God and of Christ refer to the same event. I suspect that answer would have satisfied the author of 2 Peter if he had been forced to explain his meaning in 2 Pet 3:4.

15 I do not mean to minimize the significance of 3:8–9. To the contrary, I regard 3:8, in particular, as profoundly integral to 2 Peter's overall construal of God, the cosmos, and time (about which, more below). The argument in 3:9—that God is not "slow," merely "patient"—was a standard plank in ancient theodicy, attested in the Hebrew Bible, in Jewish and Christian texts, and in the works of Stoic and Middle Platonist defenders of God's providence. My point is that both the terminology in 3:4b, and the topics addressed in 3:5–7 and 3:10–13, indicate that 2 Peter was chiefly occupied not with delays but with the perennial problem of the theological and philosophical *coherence* of the claim that God would "come" and radically change God's own created order.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

parts blasphemous and ludicrous. These charges of impiety and stupidity can be amply illustrated from older attacks against the doctrine of a conflagration (whether that doctrine was being espoused by Stoics, Epicureans, or Christians). Looking at the recurring patterns of such attacks—and of the responses by advocates of a conflagration—will provide a more detailed and nuanced sense of the contours of this ancient discourse. This, in turn, will help us to appreciate how and why 2 Peter 3:5–13 has molded its source material in an effort to address some of the most trenchant criticisms leveled against his eschatology.

The second way that *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5 can illuminate 2 Peter 3 emerges when we examine how this passage was adapted in the *Sibylline Oracles* (generally agreed to be one of, if not the, earliest texts to draw on the *Apocalypse of Peter*).[16] I will try to demonstrate that *Sib. Or.* 2 helps to explicate what 2 Peter 3 means by some of its more opaque expressions. In particular, I will defend the view that *Sib. Or.* 2.196–213, which parallels the conflagration of *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5, sheds considerable light on the meaning of the words γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα [οὐχ] εὑρεθήσεται (2 Pet 3:10). I will argue that the words τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα refer not to "*human* deeds" awaiting God's judgment, but rather to all the "*terrestrial phenomena*," God's "works in the earth," that perish at the conflagration. Recognizing the meaning of this phrase helps resolve the textual problem regarding the presence or absence of the negative particle.

Additionally, we will see that *Sib. Or.* 2.325–29, which describes an eschatological end of *time itself,* sheds light on 2 Pet 3:12–13. The conviction that time could not exist in the absence of the movements of the heavens can be richly illustrated from Greek philosophical texts and from Jewish and Christian interpretations of Genesis. In *Sib. Or.* 2.325–29 this conviction is given poignant expression: with the melting of the heavens and the elements comes the end of the perennial phenomena of time: there will be no more day or night, no more seasons. This pattern makes excellent sense of the rare expression "the day of God" (2 Pet 3:12). When 2 Peter says that all things will melt "for the sake of *the coming of the day of God*," it depicts nothing less than a return to the timelessness of God's unique "day one" (Gen 1:5; 2 Pet 3:8 *bis*). The new creation (3:13) hearkens to the original creation; just as it was in the beginning, when God alone existed prior to the creation of time, so it will be in the end, when God—and those who "partake of the divine nature"—exist in the timeless "day of eternity" (2 Pet 3:18).

16 For the Sibyl's dependence on *Apoc. Pet.*, see the Appendix at the conclusion of this chapter.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

1.1 *The Skeptical Reaction to* Apoc. Pet. *4–5 and the Taunt in 2 Pet 3:4*

One way we might adjudicate among the various theories about the outlook of 2 Peter's "scoffers"[17] is to delve into the ancient discourse, using the reaction of one hostile reader of the *Apoc. Pet*. 4–5 as a point of departure. What emerges is that the idea of a conflagration struck many ancients as *theologically offensive*, worthy of *derision*, and childishly implausible.

1.1.1 "A Passage Full of Impiety"

We may start with the perceived impiety. There was widespread ancient sentiment that *even to contemplate* the destruction of the cosmos was a form of "shocking atheism"[18] and "the worst of profanities."[19] This is the Hellene's overriding reaction to *Apoc. Pet.*, treating both passages he cites as frankly blasphemous. The first passage he quotes is *Apoc. Pet.* 4.13:

> Let us also consider what is said in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It intimates that the heaven together with the earth will be judged, thusly: "The earth," it says, "will present everyone to God on the Day of Judgment and that it will itself be judged with the heaven that surrounds [it]."
>
> *APOCRIT*. 4.6.1[20]

This claim that *heaven* would be destroyed could only have been said in *slander* (ἐκ διαβολῆς) against the Creator. What possible reason could God have to destroy "the pinnacle of his craftsmanship," which obeys "*divine* laws" and "from the beginning [ἐξ ἀρχῆς]" "remains [διαμένων] always" the same (note here the resonance with 2 Pet 3:4b).[21]

---

17 For a good brief survey of the vast literature, see Jörg Frey, "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 507–10.

18 Philo, *Aet*. 10: δεινὴν δὲ ἀθεότητα.

19 Philo, *Aet*. 106: πάντων ἀνοσιώτατον.

20 λελέχθω κἀκεῖνο τὸ λελεγμένον ἐν τῇ Ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ Πέτρου. Εἰσάγει τὸν οὐρανὸν ἅμα τῇ γῇ κριθήσεσθαι οὕτως· Ἡ γῆ, φησί, παραστήσει πάντας τῷ Θεῷ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως καὶ αὐτὴ μέλλουσα κρίνεσθαι σὺν καὶ τῷ περιέχοντι οὐρανῷ.

Cf. *Apoc. Pet.* 4.13 (E): "And all (things or people) the earth will give back on the day of judgment, for in it (the day) *the earth must be judged* at the same time, *and heaven with it*."

21 *Apocrit*. 4.6.3–4. The Hellene had already taken Paul to task for his "slander" against the Creator (*Apocrit.* 4.1.3). Cf. *also Apocrit*. 4.24b.7, where he scoffs at the idea that God would resurrect pitiful human bodies and yet would do nothing about "the heavens *melting*, the stars *falling*, the earth *perishing*" (τὸν μὲν οὐρανόν… τηκόμενον καὶ ἄστρα πίπτοντα καὶ γῆν ἀπολλυμένην). Might this description also draw on the language of *Apoc. Pet.*? Note that it occurs shortly after *Apocrit*. 4.24a.5, which itself has links to *Apoc. Pet.* 4.5, 7 (E); see

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

To this he adds what he regards as a second quotation from *Apoc. Pet.*:

> And every power of heaven will melt; and heaven will be rolled up like a scroll; and all the stars will fall as leaves from a vine and as leaves fall from a fig tree.
>
> *APOCRIT.* 4.7.1

It is uncertain whether the Hellene was correct to ascribe this quotation to the *Apoc. Pet.*[22] In any event, his estimation of the sentiment is clear: it is a passage "*full of impiety*" (ἀσεβείας μεστόν). If Jesus were to destroy the heavens, "he would be imitating the most *impious* of men [τοὺς ἀσεβεστάτους]: those who destroy their own children" (*Apoc.* 4.7.2).[23]

The Hellene was not alone in finding it blasphemous to think God would destroy creation. As Philo notes, if God were to allow the destruction of the cosmos, there would remain only two subsequent possibilities. God might create a *new* cosmos, but that would necessarily impugn his skill and intelligence in the construction of the first one—something "profane even to contemplate" (*Aet.* 43). On the other hand, to imagine that God would allow the destruction of the universe and would *not* make a new one would be "*double the sacrilege*"

M.R. James, "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter," *JTS* 12 (1910–11): 40, who notes also Origen, *Cels.* 5.14, among other texts.

22 The general topic corresponds to *Apoc. Pet.* 5:4–5 (E): "the stars shall be melted by flames of fire, as if they had not been created." What is missing in the Ethiopic, of course, are the phrases from Isa 34:4.

I incline toward the view that the Hellene has accurately cited the version of *Apoc. Pet.* that was available to him, which apparently included a version of Isa 34:4 very close to that of Symmachus (cf. Eusebius, *In Isa.* 2.7, on Isa 34:4). As Richard Goulet notes, when Macarius himself quotes Isa 34:4 in his reply, he follows the translation of the LXX; this suggests that the initial *deviation* from the LXX came from the Hellene, who presented *Apoc. Pet.* 5.4–5, with *its* quotation of Isa 34:4, as he found it (Richard Goulet, *Macarios de Magnésie: Le monogénès* [Paris: Vrin, 2003], 411).

As an additional reason to believe that some versions of *Apoc. Pet.* contained Isa 34:4, we should observe that *Sib. Or.* 2.201–2 has the language of Isa 34:4 in a section closely parallel to *Apoc. Pet.* 5 (note that "gnashing of teeth" follows in both *Sib. Or.* 2.203 and *Apoc. Pet.* 5.9 [E]).

For further discussion of the question, see Kraus and Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse*, 93; Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 300; John Granger Cook, *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 232–34.

23 Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 41b: "to will to dissolve that which is fairly joined together and in good case were the deed of a *wicked one*."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(ἀσέβημα διπλοῦν), entailing that God "rejoiced in disorder and inactivity and every kind of faultiness" (*Aet*. 85).[24]

In contrast to such an impious belief, the dogma of the world's *indestructibly and eternity* was felt to express appropriate reverence for the creator and his creation.[25] This was the "holier doctrine" (ὁσιώτερον δόγμα). Indeed, Philo notes, it was so much holier than the alternative that it was even embraced by some Stoics, who abandoned their school's blasphemous creed, either "led by God" (ἅτε θεόληπτοι) to better notions, or because they had become old enough finally to "discern things precious and *worthy of reverence*."[26]

1.1.2 Foolishness to the Greeks

We turn now to one of the Hellene's other points: not only was the idea of *ekpyrōsis* impious and blasphemous, it was also incoherent and worthy of derision. Following his first quotation (*Apoc. Pet.* 4.13 in *Apocrit*. 4.6.1), he expresses amazement that anyone could be "so *uneducated* or so *stupid*" as to believe such things (*Apocrit.* 4.6.2). The second quotation (4.7.1) merely compounds "the portentous falsehood and enormous pretension" (4.7.2). He points out that destruction of the heavens and earth contradicts the Christians' own scripture, and has a bit of fun at their expense with the help of Isa 66:1. He notes: if God destroys the heaven, which is God's "throne", and destroys "the *element* of the earth [τὸ τῆς γῆς στοιχεῖον]," which is God's "footstool," then in the eschaton, God will have no place to sit or rest his feet![27] He concludes that it will be hard for him to find a "doctrine more *mythical* than this one."[28] (All of this derision is of a piece with the Hellene's treatment of 1 Cor 7:31, which he dismisses an "implausible" and "silly little expression," no better than "old wives' tales."[29])

This reaction also had many earlier exponents. Celsus regarded it as "foolish" (ἠλίθιον) for the Christians to believe God would bring fire on the world—as if

24 Cf. also *Aet*. 40–41 for similar theological objections to any new creation.

25 *Aet*. 20.

26 *Aet*. 76–77, where Philo names three well-known Stoic defectors: Boethus, Panaetius, and Diogenes the Babylonian. Cf. Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.85, 118; Origen, *Cels*. 5.20; D.L. 7.142, and on the history of Stoic dissent, which began already with some of Chrysippus's students, see Jaap Mansfeld, "Providence and the Destruction of the Universe in Early Stoic Thought," in *Studies in Hellenistic Religions*, ed. M.J. Vermaseren, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain 78 (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 156–57.

27 *Apocrit.* 4.7.4. Porphyry and Celsus also note that belief in a fiery end contradicted other biblical passages that extolled the permanence and goodness of the created order.

28 *Apocrit*. 4.8.1: ἄλλο δὲ μυθωδέστερον τούτου … δόγμα.

29 *Apocrit*. 4.1.2–2.1.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the deity were "like a cook," "roasting" the rest of humanity.[30] Celsus thinks that the Christians have merely garbled older traditions about the conflagration, and hence arrived at "their mistaken opinion that God will come down and bring fire like a *torturer*."[31] Porphyry "charged the Christians with *supreme folly* in asserting that this world is doomed to perish."[32] The pagan interlocutor in the *Octavius* is astounded that Christians compound their "lunatic notion" (*furiosa opinione*) about the conflagration by "embellishing and embroidering [it] with old wives' tales [*aniles fabulas*]."[33]

Let me conclude this exploration of one individual's reaction to *Apoc. Pet.* 4–5, and of the attitudes his reaction epitomizes. I believe that the sentiments we have noted offer a plausible background against which to interpret the taunt in 2 Pet 3:4. This is not to suggest that 2 Peter's opponents were as well versed in the anti-conflagration arguments as were Philo, Celsus, Porphyry, or Macarius's "Hellene." Deep knowledge of the philosophical tradition was not necessary; the sentiments against any destruction of the cosmos were widely diffused.[34]

Furthermore, the eschatological skepticism expressed in 2 Pet 3:4 could have been derived solely on the basis of biblical texts, without the faintest cognizance of the philosophical discourse.[35] It is important to remember just how many passages from the Hebrew Bible categorically affirm the permanence of God's good creation; this scriptural witness merely amplifies the challenge faced by 2 Peter in defending the contrary position. When biblical texts (and the Jewish texts they inspired) asserted that the heavens and earth would "always remain," they even used some of the very phrases we find on the lips of the scoffers in 2 Pet 3:4.[36] Further biblical reason to reject the idea of a cosmic

30 *Cels.* 5.14. There are some grounds for the view that Celsus here was himself reacting to the *Apocalypse of Peter*; so James, "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter," 40; and Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 51.

31 *Cels.* 4.11: ἐσφαλμένῃ δόξῃ λέγειν ὅτι ὁ θεὸς καταβήσεται δίκην βασανιστοῦ πῦρ φέρων. Origen knows that Celsus is "mocking" (χλευάζων) them (4.13).

32 Augustine, *Civ.* 20.24 (Bettenson).

33 Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 11.1–2 (Clarke, adjusted).

34 Note that Lucretius, writing in a vastly different social and intellectual milieu, felt that it was "difficult to prove" that "destruction awaits the heavens and the earth" (*accidat exitium caeli terraeque futurum*); he knew that his claims might sound "novel and remarkable" (*res nova miraque* [*Rer.* 5.97–98]).

35 In treating the "biblical" evidence separately from the philosophical, I do not mean to revive the specter of the "Hellenism-Judaism" dichotomy.

36 Ps 119 [118]:90 (διαμένει); Ps 148:5–6 (God established the heavens forever, and established a decree that "shall not *pass away*" [οὐ παρελεύσεται]); Eccl 1:4; Sir 16:26–28; 42:23: πάντα ταῦτα ζῇ καὶ *μένει* εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα); Wis 1:14; etc.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

destruction could be found in God's oath never again to destroy the world in a flood,[37] an oath that was often—quite justifiably—understood as an assurance against *any* future destruction, not merely a promise not to destroy *with water*.[38]

In short, there was ample basis for the taunt in 2 Pet 3:4: scriptural, theological, cosmological, and common-sensical. The Hellene's reaction to *Apoc. Pet*. 4–5, along with a host of earlier evidence, reveals that it seemed impious and ignorant to think that the good and stable cosmos would be undone by disruptive divine intervention.

All of this reminds us that those who wished to defend the contrary position had their work cut out for them. How could a Christian who wanted to defend the belief in a fiery end of the cosmos respond?[39] I will look more closely at 2 Peter's response momentarily, but for now it is helpful to note that one of the ways the Christian apologists attempted to ameliorate the scandal of their eschatological teaching was to point out that very similar beliefs had been held by philosophers of the highest esteem (most notably the Stoics, but also Plato and the Epicureans).[40] Obviously 2 Peter does *not* invoke any philosophical school by name. (In fact, he does not even avail himself of the most distinctive Stoic conflagration terminology).[41] But some of 2 Peter's language certainly is

37 Gen 8:21–22; 9:11; Isa 54:9; Sir 44:18; *Sib. Or.* 1.317–18; *L.A.B.* 3.9.

38 So *1 En.* 10.22; 55.2; Mek. (on Exod 20:2); *b. Zeb*. 116a; and *Gen. Rab.* 49.9, where Abraham virtually chides God: "Would you evade your oath? Not a deluge of water will you bring but a deluge of fire? Then you have not acted according to your oath!"

39 Of course, many Christians were themselves deeply troubled by some of the Bible's bolder descriptions of cosmic destruction—especially the destruction of the heavens. They argued that the biblical language was metaphorical, or that it spoke only of the destruction of the lower heavens (i.e. the atmosphere). Note that *2 Clem.* 16.3, so often cited to explicate 2 Pet 3:10, actually shows no compunction in consigning "*all* of the earth" to the fire; yet it takes pains to note that only "*some* of the heavens" will melt (τακήσονταί τινες τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ).

40 Explicit appeal to the fact that philosophers also endorsed conflagration: Justin, *1 Apol.* 20.1–4; 60.8–10; *2 Apol.* 6(7); Tatian, *Or. Graec.* 25.2 (cf. 6.1); Theophilus, *Autol.* 2.37–38; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 34.1–5 (who notes, for good measure, the united witness of Stoics, Epicureans, *and* Plato!); Origen, *Cels.* 5.15: "a doctrine maintained also by some Greeks whose philosophy cannot be despised"; *Cels.* 5.20: "Celsus does not laugh at it [viz. the Stoic version of the conflagration] but probably even respects it, since he thinks that Zeno was wiser than Jesus." Origen (*Cels.* 4.20) also notes the similarity of the Christians' version of a conflagration to the periodic fires described by Plato (*Tim.* 22).

41 To give just one example, one might have expected 2 Peter to use a term such as καταναλίσκω, which was both thoroughly Stoic (Plutarch, *Mor.* 1075B–C=*SVF* 2:1049) *and* biblical (Zeph 1:18; 3:8, καταναλωθήσεται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ, "the whole earth will be *consumed*" in the fire of God's wrath).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

inflected with philosophical language, and there is at least prima facie reason to suspect he used *that* language, rather than restricting himself to biblical idioms, for the same reason as those apologists who *named* the philosophers: it was one way to make Christian teaching more credible and less liable to the standard attacks. This aspect of 2 Peter's rhetorical strategy would thus resemble the way Hellenistic Jewish authors such as Philo and Wisdom, or Christian apologists such as Athenagoras, attempted to explicate biblical miracles by describing them in terminology that would allude "to a specific physical theory well known in Hellenistic philosophy."[42]

2 Apoc. Pet. 4–6 and 2 Peter 3:10–13 in the Light of Sibylline Oracles 2

Frey argues that the expansive description of a conflagration and the final judgment in the *Apoc. Pet*. 4–6 can illuminate the more compressed and ambiguous phrases in 2 Pet 3:7, 10, and 12.[43] In particular, he asserts that in *Apoc. Pet*. 4–6, the total conflagration is *followed by* the "day of God," which is then identified as the day of judgment.[44] This sequence, in turn, allows him to draw out the full significance of the different prepositional phrases in 2 Pet 3:10 and 12. He concludes that in 2 Peter, just as in *Apoc. Pet*., the conflagration occurs *on* the "day of the Lord" (3:10: ἐν ᾗ) and it occurs "for *the sake of*" (3:12: δι᾽ ἣν) the "day of God," when the earth and the works in it will be "found," that is, laid bare to divine judgment. Thus the conflagration is a "preparatory act," making way for the Judgment, that is, the "day of God."[45]

---

42 David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 43 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979), 331. Cf. Wis 19:6, 18–21 on the "transposition" of the *stoicheia* in the exodus; Philo, *Mos*. 2.266–67, on the changing of the *stoicheia* in the miracle of the manna; and Athenagoras, *Res*. 2.5.3–4, describing the "dissolution" (λύω) of the *stoicheia* of the human body, to explain the resurrection.

43 Frey claims (e.g. p. 33 in the present volume) that *Apoc. Pet.* can be used to unpack the denser and less clear language in 2 Pet 3:10–12. Specifically, the *Apoc. Pet.* gives a scenario in which the cosmic meltdown does not really entail the destruction of everything, since after the conflagration, there are still humans being pursued by the fire for judgment.

44 *Apoc. Pet*. 4:1 (E): "And see now what will happen to them in the last days *when the day of God comes.*" This day is subsequently referred to as "the day of judgment" (*Apoc. Pet*. 4:2; cf. also 4:5, 9, 12–13; 5:1), when the dead are raised for judgment, and heaven and earth are judged as well.

Cf. Rev. 16:14–15; G. Delling, "ἡμέρα," *TDNT* 2:951: "The special expression 'day of God'… is always interpreted as the day of judgment."

45 p. 30 in the present volume: "According to *Apoc. Pet.* 6, it is after the conflagration that Christ returns on a cloud to sit on the throne of glory and to judge the deeds of all humans.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

I have reservations about this proposal. It is true that *Apoc. Pet.* 4:1 (E) offers a striking parallel to the rare expression "coming of the day of God," and that that day is defined as the day of judgment. But I am not able to see that *Apoc. Pet*. 4–6 actually presents the conflagration as something that takes place *prior* to this day of judgment. In fact, *Apoc. Pet.* 5:1–2 (E) seems to say that the conflagration occurs *on* this fateful day: "And (this) will happen *on* the day of judgment:.... Cataracts of fire will be opened up...."[46]

I would now like now to develop my alternative interpretation of 2 Pet 3:10–13. Although this will differ significantly from Frey's, it builds on two of his observations. First, I am persuaded by his claim that we must not ignore the subtle differences between 3:10 and 12: first comes the sudden and cataclysmic "day of the Lord," *on which* the world burns (3:10); and this takes place "*for the sake of* the coming of day of God" (3:12) and the new creation (3:13). Second, I concur with the attempt to unpack 2 Peter's text by considering passages from its sources that are clearer and more explicit.

As I suggested earlier, I believe we have a very illuminating text in the adaptation of *Apoc. Pet*. 4–5 found in *Sib. Or*. 2. In it, I believe we find evidence that supports my two main interpretive proposals. First, "the earth and the works in it" refers to all that God has made and sustains on the earth—works destroyed in the conflagration. Second, the "day of God" refers to the timelessness that accompanies the destruction of the cosmos. These two proposals are interrelated, for many of the passages that dilate on the end of time draw attention to the *loss* of all the activities—often called τὰ ἔργα—that earth once enjoyed.

We may begin by quoting the depiction of the conflagration in *Sib. Or*. 2.196–213, which contains both of these motifs.

> And then a great river of blazing fire
> will flow from heaven, and will consume every place,
> land and great ocean and gleaming sea,
> lakes and rivers, springs and implacable Hades

The fire that punishes sinners must therefore be distinguished from the fire of the conflagration before Christ's return. It thus becomes conceivable why the description of the conflagration does not mention Christ. Second Peter 3:12 phrases this quite precisely: The burning of the heavens and the elements happens 'for the sake of' the 'day of God,' viz. of the judgment (i.e., as a preparatory act)."

46 Furthermore, I do not find the sequence in *Apoc. Pet.* 4–6 to be particularly easy to follow. After the apparently definitive words "And then the whole creation has been melted" (5:6 [E]), the next sentence describes the children of men "fleeing" from east to west and north to south (5:7 [E]). Fleeing on what?

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

and the heavenly vault. But the heavenly luminaries [οὐράνιοι φωστῆρες]
will crash together, also into an utterly desolate form.
For all the stars will fall together from heaven on the sea.
All the souls of men will gnash their teeth,
burning in a river, and brimstone and a rush of fire
in a fiery plain, and ashes will cover all.
And then all the elements of the world will be widowed—
air, land, sea, light, vault of heaven, *days, nights*.
No longer will innumerable birds fly in the air.
Swimming creatures will no longer swim the sea at all.
No laden ship will voyage on the waves.
No guiding oxen will plow the soil.
No sound of trees under the winds. But at once all
will melt into one and separate into clear air.[47]

2.1 *"The Earth and the Works in It"* (*3:10*)

We may use this passage first to consider its implications for the words γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα. In all the debates about the *text* of 2 Pet 3:10d, and about the *meaning* that should be assigned to the passive of εὑρίσκω, less attention has been given to the meaning of this phrase which forms the *subject* of the verb.

In *Sib. Or.* 2, when the fire consumes heaven and earth and "all the elements of the world" (στοιχεῖα πρόπαντα τὰ κόσμου), the elements are enumerated, much as we might expect: *fire* devours the *air*, *land*, and *sea*. (We note in passing that the burning of the heavenly luminaries entails also the destruction of "days and nights" [ἤματα νύκτες].) But then the Sibyl elaborates, in mournful detail, just what was destroyed in each of these respective realms: birds no longer fly in the air, nor do fish swim in the sea; no winds blow in the trees. Finally, *human* industry in these realms is likewise lost: no "laden ship will voyage on the waves; no guiding oxen will plow the soil." In 1912, M.R. James proposed that this passage could clarify both the textual and interpretive problem presented by "*the earth and the deeds in her* will [not] be found" (2 Pet 3:10).[48] In fact, James's proposal is stronger than he may have realized or had space to explore, for everything that *Sib. Or.* 2 says is destroyed in the conflagration is

47 Trans. John J. Collins, "Sibylline Oracles (Second Century B.C.–Seventh Century A.D.)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 350, adjusted.

48 M.R. James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*, CGTSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), 32: "A passage in the Sibylline oracles [sc. *Sib. Or.* 2.208–13] … shows what is meant by ἔργα and favours the reading οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

also described in biblical and post-biblical texts as the "works" of God—often with the very phrase "the works in the earth."

Often in the Hebrew Bible, the various realms of the created order are described as the "work" or "works" of God.[49] Examples are plentiful,[50] and two passages may be singled out for their relevance to later catalogues of God's created "works." Psalm 8 describes humans as lower than the awesome "work" of the heavens (8:3), yet granted dominion over God's terrestrial "works": "all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas" (Ps 8:7–8). In greater detail, Psalm 104 celebrates God's works on earth (Ps 104:10–18: plants, animals, humans, and geological entities); then describes the sun and moon, and the way they structure time for animal and human activity (Ps 104:19–23); and concludes by describing the "work" of the sea, with its support for aquatic life and human seafaring (Ps 104:24–27).

Major Jewish texts such as 1 Enoch, Sirach, and Jubilees similarly extol God's "works" both in heaven and "in the earth," and do so with the terminology we find in 2 Peter 3. Particularly illuminating is the language used in 1 Enoch 2–5. This passage opens with parallel injunctions: "contemplate all the *works in heaven* [πάντα *τὰ ἔργα* ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ], how they do not change their paths"; and "look at the earth [τὴν γῆν] and consider *the works which occur in her* [τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ γενομένων]" (*1 En.* 2.1–2). Here it is obvious that τὰ ἔργα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ can only refer to the luminaries, with their perfectly regular movements. By the same token, τῶν ἔργων τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ γενομένων does not refer to *human* moral conduct, but to *natural terrestrial phenomena*. Indeed, Enoch describes these "works in the earth" in some detail (*1 En.* 2.3–5.3), noting the regularity of the seasons ("summer and winter" [2.3]; "from year to year" [5.2]; cf. Gen 1:14; 8:22), and the cycles of meteorological, botanical, and geophysical phenomena (rain, clouds, dew; the species and lifecycles of trees; rivers and waters). All of these "works in the earth" are said to have *their own* "works" (*1 En.* 5.2, 3), which they carry out in obedience to God's word.

Like 2 Peter, but unlike some other texts I will consider, 1 Enoch sets a *terminus* for this harmonious picture: the "earth and the works in it" will continue "from the beginning *until the consummation*" (ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς μέχρι τελειώσεως,

49 מַעֲשֶׂה (BDB s.v. 2b; HALOT s.v. 4.) is far more common in this usage than is מְלָאכָה, despite the fact that the latter is used three times for God's "work" in the hexaemeron (Gen 2:2–3). The LXX renders both words by ἔργον, usually in the plural.

50 Of the heavens and earth: Ps 19:1; 102:25; 103:22; 145:9–10; 1 Esdr 4:36. Of peoples: Job 34:19; Isa 29:23; Isa 19:25 (even Egypt and Assyria); Isa 60:21 (Israel).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2:2). Enoch describes the nature of that "consummation" as a fiery conflagration: mountains will "*dissolve*," "*flow*," and "*melt*" (διαλυθήσονται, διαρυῆναι, τακήσονται, 1:6); the earth is split apart; and "everything on earth will perish" (πάντα ὅσα ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀπολεῖται, 1:7).

In language very similar to that of *1 En.* 2–5, Sirach repeatedly extols the perfection of God's "works" in heaven and earth. But whereas 1 Enoch envisions their fiery end, Sirach emphasizes their eternity.[51] Sirach 42:15–43:33 offers the most extended praise of the "works of the Lord," starting with heaven (the sun, moon, and stars), progressing downward (rainbow, snow, winds, storms, clouds, ice, dew), and concluding with the sea and aquatic life.[52] As in Enoch, these works have their *own* "works" (τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν, 16:27). (The idea that God's works in nature have *their own* works [*1 En.* 5.2–3; Sir 16:27] continues to be used by later Jewish-Christian authors; cf. *Odes Sol.* 16.13: "*created things* run according to their courses, and *work their works*, and they are not able to cease and be *idle*.")[53]

Similarly, Jubilees 2 lists all the different "works" (τὰ ἔργα) that God made on each day of creation, works that are summarized as "everything in the heavens and *in the earth* [ὅσα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ *ἐν τῇ γῇ*], in the seas and in the abyss, in the light and in the darkness and everywhere."[54] (Note that the literary context bears comparison with 2 Pet 3:4 and 10–13.)[55]

---

51 Sir 16:26–28 (εἰς αἰῶνα; εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν; ἕως αἰῶνος); 42:23 (πάντα ταῦτα [sc. τὰ ἔργα] ζῇ καὶ *μένει* εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). Sir 42:17 notes that God has "established" (ἐστερέωσεν) all things so that "the universe might stand *firm*" (στηριχθῆναι ἐν δόξῃ αὐτοῦ τὸ πᾶν).

One way Sirach emphasizes the stability of the cosmos is by noting that God's works come in mutually reinforcing *pairs* (Sir 33:14–15; 42:24–25), thereby adapting the old philosophical tradition that the *stoicheia* were paired. I suspect it is precisely that idea of paired *stoicheia* that lies behind the unique eschatological metaphor we encounter in the *Sibylline Oracles*, that at the final conflagration the elements will be "*widowed*" (*Sib. Or.* 2.206; 3.80–81; 8.337). The Sibyl's point is that when the elements melt into one, each loses its companion.

52 For a similar schema, cf. Dan 3:57–87 (Θ)=Sg Three 35–65, where the catalogue of "works" named by the three young men overlaps with Sirach's, but is even more comprehensive.

53 In the word "be idle" there is an allusion to the Peshitta of Gen 8:22, where "shall not *cease*" uses the same Syriac root.

54 Jub 2:16 (my trans.); Greek text from James C. Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees*, Corpus scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 510–511; Scriptores Aethiopici, 87–88 (Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 1:260.

55 Jub 1:26–29 explains that the scope of the ensuing book will encompass everything "from the beginning of the creation" "until the time when I [God] descend," which is to say: "from [the time of creation until] the time of the new creation when the heavens, the earth, and all their creatures will be renewed" (trans. VanderKam).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Even the simple expression "the earth and *that which is in it* [τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ]," without the word "works," was a standard way to describe the terrestrial sphere of God's creation.[56]

Such evidence could be multiplied, and more examples will be seen in the discussion of the end of time. We can draw the present section to a close by noting what may be the earliest surviving Jewish depiction of the conflagration, that of Ps.-Sophocles.[57] Ps.-Soph. describes the "collapse" of the universe (ἐκλίπῃ τὸ πᾶν), when fire destroys the heaven, "everything on earth [ἅπαντα τἀπίγεια]," and the sea. Then Ps.-Soph. laments the loss of each realm's erstwhile activities, much in the manner of the Sibyl: "the whole wavy deep will be gone"; "earth" will be desolate of *dwellings*; and the "air" will be "*without birds*."[58]

2.1.1 Conclusion Regarding 2 Pet 3:10d

It will be clear that I think these texts point us away from the prevailing interpretation of 2 Pet 3:10. Like many other distinguished scholars, Frey defends the reading εὑρεθήσεται, and understands the whole phrase to mean that "the earth and the deeds [*done by humans*] upon it will be laid bare to divine judgment."[59] But the passages we have just reviewed suggest that there is no need to insert the bracketed words "*done by humans*"; the "works in the earth" are simply God's works.[60] We have seen how often these works perish in the

---

A similar eschatological "renewal" of the "*works* of heaven and earth" is also described in the fragmentary 4Q434: "to [de]stroy peoples and cut down nations and wicked [...] *renew* the *works of heaven and earth* [מעשי שמים וארץ], and let them rejoice" (4Q434, frag. 2, lines 2–3; trans. M. Weinfeld and D. Seely, "4QBarkhi Nafshi[a]," in *Qumran Cave 4.XX: Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 2*, ed. E. Chazon et al. [DJD XXIX; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999] 279–80).

56 Isa 42:5: "the earth and *what is in it*" (τὴν γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ: הָאָרֶץ וְצֶאֱצָאֶיהָ: "the earth and *what comes out of her*," i.e. vegetation); Dan 3:76 Θ: the celebration of God's works includes πάντα τὰ φυόμενα ἐν τῇ γῇ; Rev 10:6: the angel swears by the one "who created heaven and what is in it, *the earth and what is in it* [τὴν γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ], and the sea and what is in it."

57 Ps.-Soph. fr. 2.

58 Trans. Harold W. Attridge, "Fragments of Pseudo-Greek Poets (Third to Second Century B.C.)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 826.

59 Adams, "'Stars,'" 228; seconded by Frey: "works done (by human beings) upon the earth" (p. 35 in the present volume).

60 I should note that there *is* some ancient support for understanding τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα as immoral human works. In a garbled version of 2 Peter 3 (mingled with several other texts),

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

final conflagration. When 2 Peter describes the disappearance of "earth and the works in her," he uses a common expression: "they will *not be found*." This is a phrase for non-existence, found throughout the Bible,[61] and used often in eschatological contexts like that of 2 Pet 3:10.[62] Sometimes scribes accidentally omitted the οὐχ from *this very expression*,[63] which is likely what happened in the case of 2 Pet 3:10.

It would appear that that original text (οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται) survived well enough to serve as an exemplar for translations of 2 Peter into Coptic and Syriac. So, although I do not think "conjectural" emendations are inherently problematic,[64] it does not seem quite fair to label this proposal a pure conjecture. For even if the reading οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται lacks *Greek* attestation, it *is* attested in multiple

---

Pseudo-Hippolytus says: "A fiery river will come forth with wrath, like the savage sea, and will burn mountains and hills and destroy the sea and dissolve the aether with burning, just like wax. The stars of heaven will fall, the sun will turn to darkness and the moon to blood; the heaven will be rolled up like a scroll, and the whole earth will be burned *because* of the deeds in her [ἡ γῆ πᾶσα κατακαυθήσεται *διὰ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα*; cf. 2 Pet 3:10], which men corrupted by fornications, adulteries, lies, impurity, idolatry, murder, and wars. For there will be 'a new heaven and a new earth'" (Ps.-Hippolytus, *Cons. mund.* 37, my trans.).

61 Deut 17:2; 18:10; 22:22; 24:7; 1 Chron 29:17; 2 Chron 31:1; Ps 37:36; Esther 2:23; 1 Sam [1 Kgds] 25:28; 1 King [3 Kgds] 1:52.

62 Isa 35:9; Jer 50 (LXX 27):20; Dan 11:19 (MT; LXX; Θ); Zeph 3:13; *Pss. Sol.* 14:9; Rev 12:8; 16:20; 18:14, 21; 20:21 (of heaven and earth!); 1QHa 12:21; 19:29; 1QS 10:22–23; 4Q171 frag. 1; col. II, lines 6–9.

63 This is the case in at least one Greek ms of Gen 5:24 (see John William Wevers, ed., *Genesis* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974], 106), which reads "Enoch *was* found" rather than "was *not* found." For an example of greater interpretive consequence and scholarly disagreement, cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 18.19: "the Essenes send their votive offerings to the temple and [do not] perform sacrifices." The Greek MSS read the affirmative (θυσίας ἐπιτελοῦσιν), but the Greek epitome has the negative (***οὐκ*** ἐπιτελοῦσι), as does the Latin (***non*** *celebrant*).

64 Cf. Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907), viii: "I have never been able to see why there should be any objection to applying to the N.T. a process which has been so often found essential to the restoration of the right text in classical authors."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

manuscripts of the Philoxenian Syriac,[65] in *all* of the Sahidic manuscripts,[66] and possibly also in P.Mich. 3520 (the "Fayyumic").[67] Regardless of how "conjectural" we should label this reading, it has not been my aim to advance the text-critical discussion by appeal to the external evidence. Rather, I hope to have shed some fresh light by exploring the most likely meaning of the phrase γῆ καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα.

As we turn now to texts that describe an eschatological end of time, we will encounter some additional passages that further confirm this interpretation of "the earth and the works in it."

2.2 *The End of Time and the Day of Eternity*

Both the *Timaeus* and the book of Genesis draw attention to the intimate connection between the creation of the cosmos and the existence of time.

65 The situation with the Syriac is complicated (see John Gwynn, *Remnants of the Later Syriac Versions of the Bible* [London: Williams and Norgate, 1909; repr., Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2005], lxviii, 20–21, 115–16; summarized by Christian Blumenthal, *"Es wird aber kommen der Tag des Herrn": eine textkritische Studie zu 2Petr 3,10*, BBB 154 [Hamburg: Philo, 2007], 80–85). In short, the Syriac manuscripts that Gwynn regarded as Philoxenian are divided between "will be found" and "will not be found." Harklean texts read "will burn up," but some Harklean MSS have "will be found" in the margin. The Harklean marginal notes are sometimes regarded as the Philoxenian readings that Harkel knew but rejected. (It should be noted that Harkel had access to only one Greek manuscript of the Catholic Epistles when he prepared his revised translation.)

Gwynn (*Remnants*, 115–16) expresses his preference for the reading "will be found," largely because he could not see the sense in the alternative. Blumenthal ("*Es wird*," 81) summarizes Gwynn's findings and, like Gwynn, concludes: "Ein Rückschluss auf eine griechische Handschrift, welche die Lesart οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται überliefert, ist aufgrund dieser Ausführungen nicht nahe liegend."

In fact, the reading "will not be found" is contained in several of the MSS which Gwynn himself regarded as the older and more reliable witnesses to the Philoxenian text. In one such manuscript (Gwynn's no. 2), the word "not" is a later insertion—but according to Gwynn, possibly from the same hand (*Remnants*, 115). In fact, one ms (no. 7) that reads "will be found" left room before the verb for the insertion of the negative, perhaps suggesting uncertainty (see Gwynn, *Remnants*, 115).

A simple explanation of the Philoxenian evidence is that it is divided because it had Greek MSS that preserved both εὑρεθήσεται and οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται.

66 For the details of the Sahidic, see Blumenthal, "*Es wird*," 67–70, 74. All five Sahidic MSS transmit 2 Pet 3:10 with the negative: "will *not* be found."

67 In the Fayyumic = P.Mich. 3520, the reading "will *not* be found" is the editors' reconstruction. ECM 4.1.252 cites P.Mich. 3520 as "apparently" (*ut videtur*) supporting the negative reading οὐχ; and ECM 4.2.123 renders the same text: "and (it will not be found) the living earth in their works which are in them," noting that "it will not be found" is a reconstruction. But Blumenthal ("*Es wird*," 74) argues that this papyrus should not lend weight to the negative reading ("*not* found"), since the lacuna where the relevant word or words would be is not large enough to guarantee that the negative particle was present.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Plato is the more explicit about the ontological dependence of time on the heavenly bodies. He states that God made the heavenly bodies "*in order that* time might be generated" (ἵνα γεννηθῇ χρόνος, *Tim.* 38c).[68] Plato is equally explicit about the potential eschatological consequences of this dependence, for he states plainly that should the heavens ever perish, time itself would perish with them: "Time came into existence along with the heaven, to the end that, having been generated together, *they might also be dissolved together* (ἅμα καὶ λυθῶσιν), if ever a dissolution of them should take place" (*Tim.* 38b).

Some aspects of Plato's account proved to be extremely controversial.[69] But the core conviction that interests us—that time could not exist in the absence of moving bodies—was shared by all branches of Hellenistic philosophy. Aristotle,[70] the Stoics,[71] and the Epicureans[72] all defined time in relationship to movement.[73] In Aristotle's lapidary formulation, "without motion, there could be no time."[74] This meant that the various philosophers also agreed with Plato's implied premise: *if* the cosmos were destroyed, time would cease as well. In Aristotle's view, both time and the heavens were uncreated and

68 Translations of the *Timaeus* are slightly modified from the LCL.

69 The reactions to Plato's account of creation and its relationship to time are well summarized by David N. Sedley, *Creationism and Its Critics in Antiquity*, Sather Classical Lectures 66 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 104–7, and Gregory E. Sterling, "Creatio Temporalis, Aeterna, vel Continua? An Analysis of the Thought of Philo of Alexandria," *Studia Philonica Annual* 4 (1992): 15–41. For a survey of time and eternity throughout the Platonic tradition, see Ilaria Ramelli and David Konstan, *Terms for Eternity: Aiônios and Aïdios in Classical and Christian Texts* (Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias, 2007), 12–28.

70 Aristotle's major discussions of time are in *Phys.* 4.10–14 (217b29–224a17) and *Phys*. 8.1 (251b11–28).

71 For the Stoics' treatment of time, which was heavily dependent on Aristotle, see A. A Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge, 1987), 1:304–13.

72 Epicureans regarded time as a "symptom accompanying movements": Ἐπίκουρος σύμπτωμα, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ παρακολούθημα ***κινήσεων*** (Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 1.8.40b). For the Epicurean treatment of time, see Long and Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 1:33–35, 37; and the helpful analysis of difficult details in David Konstan, *A Life Worthy of the Gods: The Materialist Psychology of Epicurus*, rev. and expanded ed. (Las Vegas: Parmenides, 2008), 130–31 n.7 and 136.

73 See P. Tzamalikos, *Origen: Cosmology and Ontology of Time*, VCSupp 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 181–85.

74 Aristotle, *Phys*. 8.1 (251b14).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

eternal.[75] For Epicurus, on the other hand, the cosmos and time would together be destroyed.[76]

Although the terminology of Genesis is quite different from that of the *Timaeus*, Gen 1:14 connects the creation of the sun and moon to the passing of times: these heavenly luminaries separate "day and night," the seasons, and the years. This language is echoed and expanded in Gen 8:22, when God promises that as long as the earth endures, these times and cycles will continue: "seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night."

Two other expressions in Genesis 1 were deemed significant for understanding the relationship of God, time, and creation. For obvious reasons, the meaning of the words "in the beginning" (Gen 1:1) was as discussed in antiquity as it has been ever since. Less famous, but no less important for the present topic, was Gen 1:5, where the "first" day of creation is not actually called "first" (with the ordinal number): it is called "day *one*" (יוֹם אֶחָד; ἡμέρα μία). That peculiar expression sparked much speculation among interpreters,[77] and its influence can be seen in other biblical and biblically inspired texts (cf. 2 Pet 3:8!). Philo understood this "day one" (Gen 1:5) as the demarcation between the *timeless* intelligible world and the sense-perceptible world in which there exists countable time (*Opif.* 15–16, 35).[78] Origen agreed: "It does not say 'the *first* day'; it says

75 Aristotle, *Phys.* 8.1 (1251b14–20) takes Plato to task for his unique and mistaken view that time was created. Aristotle notes with approval that Democritus had proven, on the basis of the uncreated nature of time, that "not *all* things have had a 'becoming'."

For heaven's unique relationship to time, cf. Aristotle, *Cael.* 2.1 (284a2–10): "Heaven neither came into being nor admits of destruction, a some assert, but is one and eternal (ἔστιν εἷς καὶ ἀΐδιος), with no end or beginning of its total duration, containing and embracing in itself the infinity of time (ἀρχὴν μὲν καὶ τελευτὴν οὐκ ἔχων τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος, ἔχων δὲ καὶ περιέχων ἐν αὑτῷ τὸν ἄπειρον χρόνον)" (trans. Barnes).

76 Sextus Empiricus *Adv. Math.* 10.188: "according to Epicurus, when the cosmos is destroyed, there exists *neither day nor night* (φθαρέντος τε τοῦ κόσμου κατὰ Ἐπίκουρον οὔτε ἡμέρα ἔστιν οὔτε νύξ),and consequently neither a diurnal nor a nocturnal phantasm" (trans. Bury, LCL, adjusted).

77 Josephus (*Ant.* 1.29) promised to explain the real reason for the cardinal number in his special treatise on "the causes of everything," a work apparently never completed. *Gen. Rab.* 3.9 records three explanations for the strange locution: it was the day when the "unique" things were created; it was the day when God "was 'one' in his universe"; it was a clue that the creation had not yet actually begun, for only when God had "entered into partership with the mortals," in the erection of the tabernacle, was there truly a "*first* day" of creation.

78 On this particular passage, see David T. Runia, *On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 171; Sterling, "Creatio Temporalis, Aeterna, vel Continua?," 23; Gregory E. Sterling, "'Day One': Platonizing Exegetical Traditions of Geneiss 1:1–5 in John and Jewish Authors," *Studia Philonica Annual* 17 (2005): 18–40.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

'day *one*.' For time did not yet exist before the world existed."[79] (As one might suspect, Gen 1:5 has a particularly rich interpretive history in the hands of the Cappadocians.)

The connections we see in both the *Timaeus* and Genesis between the heavenly bodies and the passage of time gave rise to particular motifs in Jewish and Christian texts. For instance, Jewish and Christian authors who depict an end of the cosmos, or who describe God radically renewing creation, frequently mention both the absence of the heavenly luminaries (Isa 60:19–20; Rev 21:23–25) and the concomitant cessation of the times and seasons that those luminaries had engendered. Conversely, authors who insist on the world's eternity dwell on the perpetual perfection of God's time-keeping "works" as guarantors of the eternity of the cosmos.

Philo illustrates this latter approach. To demonstrate that Moses taught the eternity of the world (*Aet*. 19), he paraphrases Gen 1:14 and 8:22, dwelling especially on the eternity of the passage of *time*, as marked by the heavenly bodies:

> Moses the lawgiver of the Jews said in the Holy Books that the *cosmos* was created and imperishable (γενητὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον ἔφη τὸν κόσμον).... He goes on in what follows to say that 'days and nights and seasons and years and the sun and moon whose natural function is to measure time are together with the whole heaven destined to immortality and continue indestructible'.
>
> trans. COLSON, LCL, adjusted

Such language is not restricted to Greek authors. We have already noted the way Sirach evokes the perfection, stability, and eternity of God's works, and many of the key passages survive in Hebrew. To Sirach one can add evidence from Qumran. García Martínez[80] notes that 4Q319 and 4Q320—texts which use the expression "from the beginning of creation" (cf. 2 Pet 3:4b)—allude to Gen 1:14, when the luminaries "allow[ed] the measurement of time, the days, years and jubilees," thus providing an "absolute beginning ('the head of all the years')" for reckoning time.

In contrast to Sirach or Philo, those who believed in an end (or radical transformation) of heaven and earth frequently developed an Urzeit-Endzeit

79 *"Non dixit: 'dies prima,' sed dixit: dies una. Quia tempus nondum erat, antequam esset mundus"* (Origen, *Comm. Gen*. on Gen 1:5).

80 Florentino García Martínez, "Creation in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Creation of Heaven and Earth: Re-Interpretation of Genesis I in the Context of Judaism, Ancient Philosophy, Christianity, and Modern Physics*, ed. George H. van Kooten, Themes in Biblical Narrative 8 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 60.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

schema by alluding to the language of Gen 1:14 and 8:22: gone will be day and night, the alternating seasons and agricultural cycles. In the end, as in the beginning, time itself will be dissolved; the final day will resemble the unique "day one" of Gen 1:5, a "day" outside of created time.

An important biblical example of this can be found in Zechariah 14. On the fateful day when the Lord "comes,"[81] "there shall not be either cold or frost: there shall be 'day one'—known to the Lord—not day and not night, for at evening time there shall be light" (Zech 14:6–7, my trans.). Here we find echoes of both Gen 8:22 ("cold and frost"; "day and night") and the Gen 1:5 ("day one").[82]

When we turn to *Sib. Or*. 2.325–29,[83] we find a more elaborate catalogue of all the times that characterize the created order—the times that will no longer exist:

> No longer will anyone say at all 'night has come' or 'tomorrow'
> or 'it happened yesterday,' or worry about many days.
> No spring, no summer, no winter, no autumn,
> no marriage, no death, no sales, no purchases,[84]
> no sunset, no sunrise. For he will make *a long day*.[85]

The *Sibylline Oracles* repeatedly describe this eschatological loss of all the times and seasons, along with their associated activities.[86] In *Sib. Or*. 3.80–92, the final fire leaves "all the elements of the world widowed"; it devours "earth, sea, the heavenly vault, *days*, and creation itself." Once the conflagration has consumed the "twinkling spheres of luminaries," then there shall be "no night,

81 Zech 14:1–7 uses several uncommon expressions for the "day of the Lord." Zech 14:1: "a day is coming *for* the Lord" (יוֹם־בָּא לַיהוָה), which is the day *when* God comes (14:3, 5). The final unique "day" is a day "*known* to the Lord" (יְוֻדַּע לַיהוָה).

82 Zech 14:7: וְהָיָה יוֹם־אֶחָד; ἔσται μίαν ἡμέραν (note the grammar!). My translation aims to bring out the allusion to Gen 1:5: יוֹם אֶחָד; ἡμέρα μία.

83 Note that this passage is followed immediately by *Sib. Or.* 2.330–38, a passage that clearly drew on *Apoc. Pet*. 14.1–2.

84 Note that the activities named in in *Sib. Or*. 2.326 are paralleled in Jesus' sayings about the sudden cataclysms in the days of Lot and of Noah: marriage (Matt 24:37//Luke 17:27); selling and buying (Luke 17:28); and agriculture (Luke 17:28: "planting"; Luke 17:35: "two *grinding meal*"; Matt 24:40–41: "two in a *field*").

85 J.L. Lightfoot argues that "he will make a *long day*" (μακρὸν ἦμαρ) is a deliberate allusion to Zech 14:6–7 and its eschatological "day one" that is free from either day or night (Zech 14:6–7) (*The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 529–30).

86 *Sib. Or*. 8.424–27 is almost identical to *Sib. Or.* 2.325–29.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

no dawn, no numerous days of care, no spring, no summer, no winter, no autumn" (3.88–90).

Several other second temple texts exhibit the same motifs, albeit rarely so hauntingly as the Sibyl. Two others may be noted. According to *4 Ezra* 7.39–43, the "day of judgment" will have no celestial bodies, no earthly elements or weather patterns, and no *time*—time described via allusions to Gen 1:14 and 8:22.[87]

In 2 Enoch there is a pronounced preoccupation with the origins and the cessation of time.[88] At the final consummation, "all time will perish, and afterward there will be neither years nor months nor days nor hours.... They will constitute a single age" (*2 Enoch* 65.7 [J]).[89] The final day will resemble the first day, free from divisions of time, for it is "a time not reckoned and unending, [with] neither years, nor months, nor weeks, nor days, nor hour" (*2 Enoch* 33.1–2 [J]). Like several of the other texts we have considered, *2 Enoch* catalogues God's manifold works in creation—the works that are gone in the end.[90] (There are particularly striking parallels in the treatment of time and eternity between *2 Enoch* and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Although it is notoriously difficult to identify a provenance or date for 2 Enoch, scholarship subsequent to the recovery of the Coptic fragments has made a strong case for Roman Egypt, indicating its relevance to one likely milieu of *Apoc. Pet.*[91])

87 "The day" will have "no sun or moon or stars, or cloud or lightning or thunder, or wind or water or air, or darkness or evening or morning or heat or frost or cold, or hail or rain or dew, or noon or night, or dawn, but only the splendor of the glory of the Most high" (trans. Stone). For the allusions to Gen 1:14 and 8:21–22, see Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 222.

88 See S. Pines, "Eschatology and the Concept of Time in the Slavonic Book of Enoch," in *Types of Redemption*, ed. R.J.Z. Werblowsky and C.J. Bleeker (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 72–87.

89 Translation: F.I. Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch (Late First Century A.D.)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 192.

90 *2 Enoch* 23:1–2 (J): "all the things of heaven and *earth* and sea and all the *elements* and the movements and their courses, and the living thunder, the sun and the moon and the stars, their courses and their changes, and *seasons and years and days and hours*, and the coming of the clouds and the blowing of the winds, and the number of the angels and the songs of the armed troops; and every kind of human thing, and every kind of language (and) singing, and human life and rules and instructions and sweet-voiced singing, and everything that it is appropriate to learn."

91 See Annette Yoshiko Reed, "2 Enoch and the Trajectories of Jewish Cosmology: From Mesopotamian Astronomy to Greco-Egyptian Philosophy in Roman Egypt," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 22 (2014): 1–24. Reed notes the impressive connections between *2 Enoch* and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. In fact, the remarkable parallels in both works' treatment of time and eternity—which Yoshiko Reed does *not* discuss—only strengthen her arguments.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

These examples should suffice to establish the prevalence of the *pattern*: at the consummation, the created divisions of time are obliterated along with the rest of creation, inaugurating a timeless "day." We turn now to the (admittedly slender) evidence of this eternal state named with the *specific* expression "day of God."[92]

Clement of Alexandria provides the clearest instance. In a discussion about the word "today" (as found in "*today* if you hear his voice"; Hebrews 3; Psalm 95), Clement says that this "today" exists continually "*until* the final consummation"; at that point, our familiar, *täglich* "today" is replaced by "the *true* 'today,' the unending *day of God*," which "reaches on throughout the ages."[93] Independently from Clement, Origen occasionally uses the expression "day of God." It is the day of the resurrection and the future state, the opposite of a mere "day of mortals."[94]

Eusebius uses the expression several times, but without any fixed meaning. In *Dem. ev*. 9.18.7, ἡμέρα τοῦ θεοῦ refers to Christ's *epiphany*, which is also "the day which the Lord has made" (Ps118[117]:24). In his *Commentary on Isaiah*, Eusebius speaks of "the day of God" overtaking the foolish beliefs of idolaters.[95] Later, commenting on the words "then your light will break forth at dawn" (Isa 58:8), Eusebius says that this light will be otherworldly and divine, illuminating souls (cf. 2 Pet 1:19): "all at once a heavenly and divine *light shall break forth early in the morning* for you. And this *light* comes against the darkness that formerly hung over our souls and drives it far away, so that we now live in the *day of God* [ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θεοῦ] and in the *light* of knowledge and truth."[96]

One must conclude from the scarcity of these examples that the precise phrase "day of God" remained as uncommon after the *Apoc. Pet*. and 2 Peter as it had been before them.

---

92 *2 Baruch* describes "your [sc. God's] day" as the day of judgment, resurrection, and the future state. Note the intriguing similarities between *2 Bar.* 49:2 ("In which *shape* will the living live *in your day*? Or how will remain their *splendor*?") and *Apoc. Pet*. (Akhmim 13–14), where the disciples are astonished by the "forms" of the glorified saints, and ask "What sort of *aeon* is it in which they have this *splendor*?"

93 Clement, *Protr*. 9.84.6: καὶ τότε ἡ ὄντως σήμερον ἡ ἀνελλιπὴς τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμέρα τοῖς αἰῶσι συνεκτείνεται. (Clement revisits this *topic*, but not this expression.).

94 Origen, *Hom. in Jer.* (on Jer 17:6 [LXX], where a misunderstanding of the MT resulted in the words, "the day of man [ἡμέραν ἀνθρώπου] I did not desire").

95 *Comm. Isa.* 1.28.43 (on Isa 2:18–21): τηνικαῦτα γὰρ ἐπιστάσης τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμέρας τὰς δόξας αὐτῶν.

96 *Comm. Isa.* 2.47.99 (on Isa 58:8); trans. Jonathan J. Armstrong, *Commentary on Isaiah: Eusebius of Caesarea*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2013), 382. Eusebius also uses "day of God" in *De Sol. Pasch*. (PG 24.697).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2.3 *Summary Observations Regarding the Depiction of Time in 2 Peter*

Let me now sketch out some of the ways these ancient discourses about time can inform our understanding of key passages in 2 Peter. When the heavens and the *stoicheia* melt in fire, and the "earth and the works in her" are no longer found, God will have brought an end to both the cosmos and to time itself. Only then can "day shine forth" (1:19),[97] a timeless and unending "day of God" (3:12), a paradoxical "day" that consists of "eternity" (3:18).[98] Now the saints enter "into the eternal kingdom of Christ" (1:11//*Apoc. Pet.* 14.2).[99] It is striking to note that 2 Peter only twice uses the vocabulary of "eternity" (1:11 and 3:18), both times to describe eternal *salvation*. This seems all the more significant when we bear in mind the fact that 2 Peter has omitted from Jude 3–19 *all three* of Jude's references to the "eternity" of *punishment*.[100]

---

97 Despite the subsequent words about "rising *in our hearts*," I take 2 Pet 1:19 to describe an objective, eschatological event, one which also has *epistemological* consequences (cf. 1 Cor 13:8–12).

98 The expression "day of eternity" (2 Pet 3:18) is even rarer than "day of God." It has a good parallel in Sir 18:10: "so are a few years in a day of eternity (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ αἰῶνος)." Cf. Sir 1:2; 50:23.

It is remarkable to observe that the Peshitta rendering of Sir 18:10 added allusions to both Ps 90:4 ("a thousand years") and to Gen 1:5 ("one day"), thus bringing together several of the same texts as has 2 Peter 3. This would seem to suggest the existence of a common exegetical tradition of reading Ps 90:4 and Gen 1:5 together. Cf. also *Didasc. apost.* 26 (6.18.14–15).

99 *Apoc. Pet.* 14.2 (R): καὶ ἀπελεύσομαι ἐγὼ καὶ οἱ ἐκλεκτοί μου ἀγαλλιῶντες μετὰ τῶν πατριαρχῶν εἰς τὴν αἰώναν μου βασιλεία[ν]. *Apoc. Pet.* 14:2 (E): "And I will give the portion of the righteous ones and I will go on rejoicing with the patriarchs into my eternal kingdom." Frey may be right to suggest 2 Peter got this expression from *Apoc. Pet.*, though if it did, it is astonishing that 2 Peter has not issued some sort of reaction to the universalistic context of his source.

Similar expressions are not altogether rare. Language close to 2 Pet 1:11 is put on Peter's lips in *Ps.-Clem. Ep. Clem.* 11.2. Justin has many references to "Christ's eternal kingdom," not all of which can be explained by appeal to Daniel 7 (note in particular *Dial.* 46 and 116). Finally, note the remarkably "Petrine" flavor of Aristides, *Apol.* 16.1: "This is *the way of truth*, which leads those who follow it *into the eternal kingdom promised by Christ*, in the life to come" (αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας, ἥτις τοὺς ὁδεύοντας αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον χειραγωγεῖ βασιλείαν τὴν ἐπηγγελμένην παρὰ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ μελλούσῃ ζωῇ). This shares multiple expressions with 2 Peter; but Aristides also knew two of 2 Peter's sources: the *Apoc. Pet.* and the *Kerygma Petrou*.

100 Jude 6: "*eternal* bonds" (δεσμοῖς ***ἀϊδίοις***) become "chains *of gloom*" (σειραῖς ζόφου) (2 Pet 2:4); Jude 7: δεῖγμα πυρὸς ***αἰωνίου*** δίκην ὑπέχουσαι becomes ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἀσεβέ[σ]ιν τεθεικώς (2 Pet 2:6); Jude 13: ὁ ζόφος τοῦ σκότους ***εἰς αἰῶνα*** τετήρηται becomes ὁ ζόφος τοῦ σκότους τετήρηται (2 Pet 2:17). For the possibility that the original Greek text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* had no references to eternal punishment, see the Appendix (below).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Thus a pronounced interest in time can be seen even before we have considered 2 Peter's most famous utterance on the subject—the citation of Ps 90:4 in 2 Pet 3:8. Space permits only two observations on that seminal verse. First, for 2 Peter to say that time is different "*with* the Lord" (παρὰ κυρίῳ)[101] captures the Psalmist's point better than many other ancient sources that use the same verse. Second, by opening and closing the paraphrase with the words "one day"—words with no basis in the MT or the Greek translations—the author alludes to the unique ἡμέρα μία of Gen 1:5. Indeed, by varying the order of these words (μία ἡμέρα … ἡμέρα μία), he elegantly evokes the Urzeit-Endzeit pattern we have seen so often: as it was in the beginning, so shall the final state exist in an eternity free from time.[102]

3 Conclusion: Reading 2 Peter 3:5–13 as a Response to the Scoffers

As we saw earlier, the idea that the cosmos would be destroyed in flames was widely regarded as implausible, impious, and a little silly. The scoffers' taunt (2 Pet 3:4) gives pithy expression to such views. So how does 2 Pet 3:5–13 marshal a defense for what he regards as the "traditional" eschatological scenario? Can he depict the destruction of the cosmos without impugning the wisdom and goodness of the Creator? Can he make a decisive and disruptive arrival of God appear credible in the face of the steady march of time? I will give a cursory sketch of how I understand 2 Peter's response to this serious challenge.

First, we should recognize that 2 Peter has already laid the groundwork of a response prior to 2 Pet 3:5–13. His use of the term φθορά and its cognates[103] effectively conjures the specter of moral and physical disintegration.[104] (Recall that the ancient debates about the cosmos were framed in precisely this

101 Philo uses the same expression when describing God's transcendence of time: "Thus with God (παρὰ θεῷ) there is no future, since He has made the boundaries of the ages subject to Himself. For God's life is not a time (χρόνος), but eternity (αἰών), which is the archetype and pattern of time; and in eternity there is no past nor future, but only present existence" (*Deus* 31–32; trans. Colson, LCL). Philo draws here on *Tim.* 37c–38b; see Sterling, "Creatio Temporalis, Aeterna, vel Continua?," 23.

102 We might compare the way *L.A.B.* 19.12 describes the *absence of time* in the final state with an allusion to Ps 90:4. God tells Moses that he "will dwell in the immortal dwelling place that is *not subject to time*" (*non tenetur in tempore*), and explains that the present "age will be *in my sight* (*in conspectu meo*) like a fleeting cloud and *passing* like *yesterday*" (trans. *OTP* 2:238, adjusted).

103 1:4; 2:12; 2:19.

104 See especially F. Gerald Downing, "Cosmic Eschatology in the First Century: «Pagan», Jewish and Christian" *L'Antiquité Classique* 64 (1995): 99–109, who notes that Stoic and

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

terminology: was the world ἄφθαρτος ἢ φθαρτός?[105]) 2 Peter makes clear in 1:4 that there is already φθορά in the cosmos—through no fault of the Creator. This φθορά must be "escaped" by participation in the divine nature. Whatever does not partake of God's imperishable nature, whatever lacks the divine *logos* by which the cosmos is bound together (3:5), will perish (φθαρήσονται) in the same destruction (ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ) that affects all natural things (2 Pet 2:12).[106] Furthermore, the existence of "corruption" in the world offers a motive for divine intervention.

Second, simply to affirm the "creation" of the cosmos (3:5) was already, in the eyes of many, to affirm that it would perish, for whatever had a beginning would have an end.[107] To go further than mere "creation," by asserting that the heavens and earth were held together ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ δι' ὕδατος (3:5) contributes to the same point: if this phrase remains perplexing as cosmology, it powerfully evokes the *fragility* of the cosmos. We can compare the way Seneca (*Nat.* 3.29.5–30.8) points to the water already threatening from all sides—in torrential rains, the surging seas, appearing in the ground wherever one digs—all to support his claim that, on one decisive day, water would destroy this world of vice, clearing the way for a new world of innocence (cf. 2 Pet 3:13, ἐν οἷς δικαιοσύνη κατοικεῖ).

The instability of a world formed from waters is further emphasized by 2 Peter's use of the word στοιχεῖα. A conventional argument for the destructibility of the cosmos was to note that it was a *composite* entity, and as such, it must incline by nature to dissolution. Of Lucretius's four main proofs that the world would be destroyed, three were effectively variations on this theme. The world is made of parts (5.351–79); it has four elements (5.235–32); there is "strife" among the elements (5.380–415).[108] Seneca makes precisely the same points (*Cons. Marc.* 26.6; *Nat.* 3.29.4–5; 3.30.5).

Epicurean language about the decay and senescence of the world strongly resembles 2 Peter 3, as well as 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra.

105 Aristotle, *Cael.* 1.10 (279b5); Philo, *Aet.* (*passim*); Epicurus: D.L. 10.73: δῆλον οὖν ὡς καὶ φθαρτούς φησι τοὺς κόσμους.

106 2 Pet 2:12: evoking the inherent destructibility of all who lack *logos*: ὡς ἄλογα ζῷα γεγεννημένα *φυσικὰ* εἰς ἅλωσιν καὶ *φθοράν* …ἐν *τῇ φθορᾷ* αὐτῶν καὶ *φθαρήσονται*. 2 Peter's desired rhetorical effect comes across despite the fact that it is not entirely clear *whose* destruction 2 Peter intends by αὐτῶν.

107 Lucretius puts considerable effort into proving that the world had not always existed (*Rer.* 5.90–109, 235–415), for if it came into being, it would perish.

108 Cf. the scholium on D.L. 10.73: δῆλον οὖν ὡς καὶ φθαρτούς φησι τοὺς κόσμους, μεταβαλλόντων *τῶν μερῶν*, on which, see Cyril Bailey, *Titi Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), 3:1355.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The prominence of στοιχεῖα in such discourse means that regardless of the *referent* of the στοιχεῖα in 2 Pet 3:10, 12—whether they refer to stars, or to fundamental physical elements, or to the daemons animating one or the other—the *sense* of the word contributes to the depiction of a cosmos that is composed of parts, and as such, a cosmos that might come undone.[109]

Emphasizing the world's inherent instability lets 2 Peter minimize the notes of divine anger *against heaven and earth* (cf. *Apoc. Pet.* 4:13 and the reaction it provoked). In effect, 2 Peter can say, "So far from heaven and earth being 'judged' by God, they will simply come apart (λύεσθαι, 3:10, 11, 12) when God's *logos*—the only thing that has ever held them together—allows them to." Other apologists made similar points.

Thus the destruction of heaven and earth need not entail that God had some irrational *animus* against creation. Although he states that the current heavens and earth are kept for fire, this fire is for "the day of judgment and destruction *of impious humans*" (3:7).[110] Thus 2 Peter notes that God's "judgment" falls primarily on wicked *humans*. And even *that* judgment—something never as theologically or philosophically offensive as the destruction of the cosmos—is tempered by notes of the hope for *repentance* (2:9a; 3:9, 15); by the less lurid description of it as annihilation (ἀπώλεια: 2:1 *bis*; 2:3; 3:7; 3:16); and perhaps also by 2 Peter's omissions of three of Jude's references to the "eternity" of punishment.

3.1 *Destruction by Flood; Destruction by Fire* (*2 Pet 3:5–7*)

Of course, central to 2 Peter's response is his claim that the flood destroyed the entire ancient cosmos. Frey regards this as "unwarranted from the biblical and early Jewish traditions,"[111] but in fact, many ancient Jewish texts portray the flood in equally universal terms. I note this not to squabble about the history of interpretation, but because, as Frey agrees, 2 Peter is so insistent on the parallelism between the destruction by water and the coming destruction by fire.[112]

109 Cf. Clement, *Quis Div. Salv.* 36.3: the "image and likeness of God" alone is the "seed" that holds all things together; without its presence, "all things will quickly dissolve" (πάντα τάχιστα λυθήσεται).

110 In 2 Pet 2:5, the cosmos that God did not spare was a "cosmos *of ungodly people*" (κόσμῳ *ἀσεβῶν*).

111 p. 31 in the present volume: "In contrast to the biblical accounts, the flood is understood as a destruction of not only the earth but of the whole created cosmos (i.e., of "heavens and earth"). Such an interpretation is *unwarranted* from the biblical *and early Jewish traditions* of the flood story." (Emphasis added.).

112 3:5: οὐρανοὶ ἦσαν *ἔκπαλαι* καὶ *γῆ*; 3:6: ὁ τότε κόσμος … ἀπώλετο; 3:7: οἱ δὲ *νῦν* οὐρανοὶ *καὶ ἡ γῆ* τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ τεθησαυρισμένοι εἰσὶν πυρί. Why would 2 Peter so emphasize this parallelism if he intended to exempt "the earth" from the final fire?

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Hence the scope of the flood points to the scope of the conflagration, and this is germane to the interpretation of 2 Pet 3:10.

Frey is right to say that in the biblical account, the flood does not destroy heaven and earth.[113] Nevertheless, Isa 24:18, 21–23 depicts God's judgment with flood imagery (Isa 24:18: "the windows of heaven are opened"), and describes a cataclysm that encompasses both earth and even "the host of heaven" (Isa 24:21; cf. the LXX: τὸν κόσμον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ).

Jewish texts often affirm that the flood destroyed the entire κόσμος, and describe the post-diluvian world as itself already a *new* creation.[114] In *Sib. Or.* 1.193–95 (=*Sib. Or.* 7.7–12), the earth, the mountains, and even the heavens "swim" when "*all things* perish" in water.[115] The subsequent world is itself a "second *aiōn*." In *1 En.* 83.1–5, Methuselah sees the future flood destroy both heaven and earth; what remains is not a merely inundated earth, but rather the primordial chaos.[116] When Josephus (*Ant.* 1.70) mentions the ancient prediction of destruction "first by water, then by fire," the scope was universal: "destruction of *the universe* [τῶν ὅλων]."[117] More examples could be given.[118]

---

113 Genesis is quite clear on the matter: God will wipe out all flesh "*under* heaven" (ὑποκάτω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) (Gen 6:17). Augustine (*Civ.* 20.24) clings to this fact in his effort spare the highest heavens from final destruction. Commenting on Ps 102:25–26 and 2 Pet 3:6–7, 10–12, Augustine argues that when Peter said that "the world of that time perished" (3:6), he should be understood to be using the whole for the part, for "in fact it was only the lowest part of [the world] that perished, along with its own region of the heavens." Augustine goes on to say that Peter's view of "the final conflagration" could be similar: the only "elements" and "heavens" that will burn up are the earth and the *lower heavens* that suffered in the flood.

114 Some texts even describe this total destruction and *re-creation* with the vocabulary used by the Stoics for the "rebirth" following each conflagration. *1 Clem* 9:4: "Noah preached to the world a *new birth*" (Νῶε … παλιγγενεσίαν κόσμῳ ἐκήρυξεν). Philo, *Mos.* 2.65: after the flood comes the "rebirth" of a second age, with the survivors of the flood being "sparks" (a term often encountered in the Stoic doctrine of *ekpyrōsis*).

115 Note the formal similarity between 2 Pet 3:6 (ὁ τότε κόσμος *ὕδατι* … *ἀπώλετο*) and *Sib. Or.* 1.194 (*ὕδασι πάντ' ἀπολεῖται*).

116 *1 En.* 83.3: "*heaven* was thrown down and taken away"; *1 En.* 83.5: "the earth has been destroyed." As Nickelsburg astutely notes, this passage ostensibly describes the flood, but its imagery is that of "cosmic collapse and annihilation"; instead of the expected references to "the windows of heaven" or "the fountains of the deep," in *1 En.* 83, "the cosmos reverts to primordial chaos" (George W.E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108*, Hermeneia [Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 2001], 349).

117 προειρηκότος *ἀφανισμὸν* Ἀδάμου *τῶν ὅλων* ἔσεσθαι τὸν μὲν κατ᾽ ἰσχὺν πυρὸς τὸν ἕτερον δὲ κατὰ βίαν καὶ *πλῆθος ὕδατος*.

118 In *1 En.* 93.4, the flood marks "the first *end*." In *2 Enoch* 34.3 (J), God declares: "I shall bring down the flood onto the earth, and I shall destroy *everything*."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

In this context we should also note something that 2 Peter does *not* say in his descriptions of the flood. A great number of Jews and Christians regarded the flood as God's effort to *purify* or *cleanse* the earth.[119] In contrast to this, 2 Peter refers only to destruction. In light of the close parallel 2 Peter develops between destructions by flood and by fire, it comes as little surprise that he does not employ the terminology of "refining" or "cleansing" when he describes the conflagration.

In short, when 2 Peter states that the whole "world" of "that time" (2 Pet 2:5, ἀρχαίου κόσμου; 3:6, ὁ τότε κόσμος) was destroyed, he also implies that the current, post-diluvian cosmos (2 Pet 3:7: οἱ δὲ νῦν οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ) is already the result of God's new act of creation.

By God's *logos*, the *cosmos* was created and is now held together; by God's word it has been destroyed in water, and it will be dissolved in fire (3:5–7, 10–12). In order to survive the destruction of *all these things* (3:11) one must partake of God's nature and God's *logos*; one must be found spotless "in him" (3:14), held in tact and "*stable*" (στηριγ-). For 2 Peter, the way to partake of this stabilizing and sustaining *logos* has both ethical (1:5–7; 3:14; 3:11) and metaphysical (1:4) dimensions. But, as Frey has persuasively shown, we need not drive a wedge between these: Becoming θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως begins with growth in "virtue" (1:5–7), and "virtue" is shared by the deity (1:3).

We conclude by noting the congruence between 2 Peter's image of salvation as participation in the divine nature (1:4) and its emphasis on the eternity of the final day. It was axiomatic that God transcended time.[120] Therefore, it follows logically those who become "partakers of the divine nature" would ultimately dwell in a "day of eternity," participating even in this aspect of the life and nature of God.

---

119 James Kugel gathers numerous examples of the flood depicted as a purification of the earth (James Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009], 188–90, 199–200). In response to Celsus's theological criticism of the flood story (how could God "*find fault* with his own handiwork, and hate and threaten and *destroy* his own offspring?"), Origen replies that the flood was a "purification of the earth," as Plato had also said (*Tim*. 22d) (*Cels*. 6.58).

120 That God transcended time was common to all Greek philosophy with the notable exception of the Stoics (see Long and Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 1:307); see the references in G. Delling, "χρόνος," *TDNT* 9:582–85.

Cf. also 4Q392 frag. 1: 5–6: the divisions of day and night, necessary for mortals, do not exist with God.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3.2 *Appendix:* Sibylline Oracles *2 and the* Apocalypse of Peter

The direct dependence of *Sibylline Oracles* 2 on the *Apoc. Pet.* has been supported by the majority of scholars who have investigated the topic.[121] This dependence was recognized already with the discovery of the Akhmim fragment,[122] and with the discovery of the full Ethiopic text, the extent of the Sibyl's dependence on *Apoc. Pet.* became clear. Especially in *Sib. Or.* 2.194–338, the parallels with *Apoc. Pet.* are both extensive and specific, and include details found rarely or not at all apart from these two texts.[123] In light of the late date of the Ethiopic MSS of *Apoc. Pet.*, the significance of this dependence is considerable, for it means that *Sib. Or.* constitutes a Greek witness to the original that was composed very soon after the *Apoc. Pet.* itself.

As Lightfoot notes: "In theory, it is possible that divergences between the Sibyl and the Ethiopic [version of *Apoc. Pet.*] could shed light on the Greek original (or at least, an earlier Greek version) that the Sibyl was working with."[124] This possibility has virtually been confirmed in several instances, of which I will briefly note three.

The first is the fact that *Sib. Or.* 2 has been used to confirm that the Ethiopic MSS preserve the original sequence, in which the vision of hell (*Apoc. Pet.* 7.1–10.7 [E]; Akhmîm 22–34) preceded the vision of paradise.[125]

The second pertains to the correct text of *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–3 (R), and to adjudicating between the Rainer fragment, with its remarkable claim that Christ would grant post-mortem salvation to sinners at the request of his people, and *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–3 (E), which restricts salvation to the saints. M.R. James was the first to argue that close parallels in terminology and meaning between *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–2 (R) and *Sib. Or.* 2.330–38 confirmed the originality of

121 Note especially the initial demonstrations of James, "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter," 39–44, 51–54. See also Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 44–46; Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 145–48, 163, 210, 232–35, 260; Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 131–43, *et passim*. Frey raises the possibility that the similarities could stem from a common milieu or tradition. In my view, Lightfoot has adequately addressed that hypothesis (see in particular *The Sibylline Oracles*, 134 n. 144).

122 See the literature cited by Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 133 n. 143.

123 The most helpful and precise graphic display of the parallels can be found in Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, Appendix C (cf. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 44–46). In addition to Lightfoot's thorough discussion of the question in her introduction (*The Sibylline Oracles*, 131–43), her commentary includes line-by-line treatment of the source-critical possibilities.

124 *The Sibylline Oracles*, 132.

125 James, "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter," 576.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the "universalist" reading of Rainer against the Ethiopic.[126] James's conclusion has received almost universal endorsement, and has been strengthened by additional lines of evidence.[127]

The third pertains to the original text of *Apoc. Pet.* 10.6–7, which is the only passage that survives in the Ethiopic and in both of the Greek fragments (Akhmîm 33–34 and the Bodleian fragment). Where the Greek texts of the Bodleian and Akhmîm describes sinners' torment as "ceaseless," the Ethiopic says the punishment lasts "forever." The Ethiopic also adds a further reference to the "eternity" of "punishment" that has no parallel in the overlapping sections of the Greek texts. Although it is a small example, this has further confirmed that originally the *Apoc. Pet.* was universalist; this universalism was erased in the Ethiopic tradition, and "the quite numerous references to the eternity of the punishments were also added."[128] Here again *Sib. Or.* 2, with its (almost) perfect absence of language about "eternal" punishment, strengthens this conclusion.

One could adduce many other examples of how *Sib. Or.* 2 has been used to recover the original text of *Apoc. Pet.* I have chosen this third example because the question of whether punishment was ever called "eternal" in the original

126 "I have no doubt the correctness of my restoration of the opening lines, for they are closely paraphrased in the following lines of Sib. Orac. II" (James, "The Rainer Fragment of the Apocalypse of Peter," 272).

127 C.D.G. Müller, "The Apocalypse of Peter," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, Tr. R.McL. Wilson, vol. 2 (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992), 637 n. 42; Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 145–48, 232–35; Jeffrey A. Trumbower, *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 50–51; Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 342–60 (especially 344); Kirsti B. Copeland, "Sinners and Post-Mortem 'Baptism' in the Acherusian Lake," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 99 (*Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–2 "is paraphrased beautifully in the poetic verses" of *Sib. Or.* 2.330–38); Ilaria Ramelli, "Origen, Bardaiṣan, and the Origin of Universal Salvation," *HTR* 102 (2009): 141, 146; Lautaro Roig Lanzilotta, "Does Punishment Reward the Righteous? The Justice Pattern Underlying the *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 151–52; Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 521–28.

Peter van Minnen ("The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 [Leuven: Peeters, 2003], 30–34) represents a rare voice of dissent about the correct *restoration* of *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1 (R). But Van Minnen agrees that *Apoc. Pet.* 14.1–3 is the source for *Sib. Or.* 2.330–38; he simply argues that the Greek text used by the Sibyl already had the same "mistake" found also in Rainer.

128 Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 148–51, quoting p. 151. The same conclusion is reached by Bauckham, *Fate of the Dead*, 210; and Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 527.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Apoc. Pet. coincides with one interesting aspect of 2 Peter's treatment of time and eternity. Namely, when drawing on Jude 3-19, 2 Peter has omitted of *all three* of Jude's references to the "eternity" of punishment.[129] It goes without saying that 2 Peter does not advocate a universalist soteriology; to the contrary, it insists repeatedly that sinners will be destroyed on the day of judgment.[130] But might we conclude from 2 Peter's redaction of Jude that 2 Peter meant to emphasize *destruction* in contradistinction to eternal torment?

Bibliography

Adams, Edward. "'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' The Complaint of the Scoffers in 2 Peter 3.4." *NTS* 51 (2005): 106–22.

Armstrong, Jonathan J. *Commentary on Isaiah: Eusebius of Caesarea*. Edited by Joel C. Elowsky. Ancient Christian Texts. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2013.

Attridge, Harold W. "Fragments of Pseudo-Greek Poets (Third to Second Century B.C.)." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 2:821–30. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985.

Bauckham, Richard J. *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Blumenthal, Christian. *"Es wird aber kommen der Tag des Herrn": eine textkritische Studie zu 2Petr 3,10*. BBB 154. Hamburg: Philo, 2007.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Collins, John J. "Sibylline Oracles (Second Century B.C.–Seventh Century A.D.)." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 1:317–472. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983.

Cook, John Granger. *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002.

Copeland, Kirsti B. "Sinners and Post-Mortem 'Baptism' in the Acherusian Lake." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 91–107. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Delling, G. "Ἡμέρα." *TDNT* 2: 943–53.

Delling, G. "Χρόνος." *TDNT* 9: 582–85.

Downing, F. Gerald. "Cosmic Eschatology in the First Century : « Pagan », Jewish and Christian—Persée." *L'Antiquité Classique* 64 (1995): 99–109.

129 Cf. Jude 6 and 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 7 and 2 Pet 2:6; and Jude 13 and 2 Pet 2:17.

130 2 Pet 2:3 (judgment and destruction); 2 Pet 3:7 ("day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly"). The threats of "destruction" predominate (2:1, 3; 3:7, 9, 16; cf. 2:12, 20).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Frey, Jörg. "Judgment of the Ungodly and the Parousia of Christ." In *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, edited by Jan G. van der Watt, 493–513. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

García Martínez, Florentino. "Creation in the Dead Sea Scrolls." In *The Creation of Heaven and Earth: Re-Interpretation of Genesis I in the Context of Judaism, Ancient Philosophy, Christianity, and Modern Physics*, edited by George H. van Kooten, 53–70. Themes in Biblical Narrative 8. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005.

Goulet, Richard. *Macarios de Magnésie: Le monogénès*. Paris: Vrin, 2003.

James, M.R. "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter." *JTS* 12 (1910–11): 36–54, 157, 362–83, 573–83.

James, M.R. "The Rainer Fragment of the Apocalypse of Peter." *JTS* 32 (1931): 270–79.

James, M.R. *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*. CGTSC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912.

Konstan, David. *A Life Worthy of the Gods: The Materialist Psychology of Epicurus*. Rev. and expanded ed. Las Vegas: Parmenides, 2008.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Kugel, James. *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Lanzilotta, Lautaro Roig. "Does Punishment Reward the Righteous? The Justice Pattern Underlying the *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 127–57. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Lightfoot, J.L. *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Long, A.A, and D.N. Sedley. *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Mansfeld, Jaap. "Providence and the Destruction of the Universe in Early Stoic Thought." In *Studies in Hellenistic Religions*, edited by M.J. Vermaseren, 129–88. Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain 78. Leiden: Brill, 1979.

Mayor, Joseph B. *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*. London: Macmillan, 1907.

Minnen, Peter van. "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 15–39. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Müller, C.D.G. "The Apocalypse of Peter." In *New Testament Apocrypha*, edited by W. Schneemelcher, Tr. R.McL. Wilson, 2:620–38. Cambridge: James Clarke, 1992.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Nickelsburg, George W.E. *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 2001.

Pines, S. "Eschatology and the Concept of Time in the Slavonic Book of Enoch." In *Types of Redemption*, edited by R.J.Z. Werblowsky and C.J. Bleeker, 72–87. Leiden: Brill, 1970.

Ramelli, Ilaria. "Origen, Bardaiṣan, and the Origin of Universal Salvation." *HTR* 102 (2009): 135–68.

Ramelli, Ilaria, and David Konstan. *Terms for Eternity: Aiônios and Aïdios in Classical and Christian Texts*. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias, 2007.

Reed, Annette Yoshiko. "2 Enoch and the Trajectories of Jewish Cosmology: From Mesopotamian Astronomy to Greco-Egyptian Philosophy in Roman Egypt." *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 22 (2014): 1–24.

Runia, David T. *On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*. Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 1. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Schott, Jeremy M., and M.J. Edwards. *Macarius*, Apocriticus. Translated Texts for Historians 62. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015.

Sedley, David N. *Creationism and Its Critics in Antiquity*. Sather Classical Lectures 66. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Sterling, Gregory E. "Creatio Temporalis, Aeterna, vel Continua? An Analysis of the Thought of Philo of Alexandria." *Studia Philonica Annual* 4 (1992): 15–41.

Sterling, Gregory E.. "'Day One': Platonizing Exegetical Traditions of Geneiss 1:1–5 in John and Jewish Authors." *Studia Philonica Annual* 17 (2005): 18–40.

Stone, Michael E. *Fourth Ezra*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

Trumbower, Jeffrey A. *Rescue for the Dead: The Posthumous Salvation of Non-Christians in Early Christianity*. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Tzamalikos, P. *Origen: Cosmology and Ontology of Time*. VCSupp 77. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Vanderkam, James C. *The Book of Jubilees*. 2 vols. Corpus scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 510–511; Scriptores Aethiopici, 87–88. Leuven: Peeters, 1989.

Wevers, John William, ed. *Genesis*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974.

Winston, David. *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 43. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 8

'In Aegyptum, ut denuo disseratur de me'

Martin G. Ruf

In the past few decades we have learned a lot about Second Peter.[1] We have learned to construe Second Peter not only according to its own self-presentation as a sequel to First Peter. We have gone beyond the boundaries of the canon in order to fathom Second Peter's literary world. We have learned to read Second Peter within the scope of second century writings; references to similar ideas and wordings in the Apostolic Fathers and other texts from this period have become standard practice. We have learned to consider Second Peter as a piece of Petrine pseudepigraphy that cannot be detached from other pseudo-Petrine writings. Hardly any scholarly monograph or commentary on Second Peter published in recent years has felt free *not* to concern itself with the Gospel, the *Apocalypse* or the *Acts of Peter* at all.[2] We have learned to appreciate Second Peter's language and style. Gone are the times where scholars could characterize the author's language as 'baboo Greek'.[3] By delving deeper into the author's word usage and the (literary) genres received and processed by him, we have begun to get a better sense of his education. We have learned to acknowledge his merits as a theologian or at least have begun to do so, quashing the verdict that Second Peter is an 'Early Catholic' writing whose author will always get the short end of the stick when compared to Paul. Yes, we

1 I want to thank Beth Houdijk who has proofread this article for her careful corrections and useful suggestions.

2 Thomas J. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 386–96 discusses Second Peter's literary relations towards other Petrine pseudepigraphic writings. Karl Matthias Schmidt, *Mahnung und Erinnerung im Maskenspiel: Epistolographie, Rhetorik und Narrativik der pseudepigraphen Petrusbriefe*, HBS 38 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003), 410–18 devotes a whole chapter to extracanonical writings in the name of Peter. Fred Lapham, *Peter: The Myth, the Man and the Writings: A Study of Early Petrine Text and Tradition*, JSNTSup 239 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003) even tries to achieve an overall view of Petrine pseudepigraphic literature, including the biblical Petrine Epistles. Markus Bockmuehl, *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory: The New Testament Apostle in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker, 2012) surveys the memory of Peter in the East and West in the first two centuries which he cannot do without discussing the evidence from such Petrine writings as the *Acts* and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

3 Edwin A. Abbott, "On the Second Epistle of Peter," *Expositor* 3 (1882): 49–63, 139–153, 204–219 extensively discusses the poor quality of Second Peter's language.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_009

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

have learned a lot about Second Peter, and maybe it is no longer even true that Second Peter can compete with the Epistle of Jude for the courtesy title 'most scholarly neglected writing of the New Testament Canon.'[4]

But every once in a while scholarship needs more than merely the addition of one new aspect to a commonly accepted overall view, or merely the destruction of one single buttress, unable to harm the overarching construct. Every once in a while an integrated concept is necessary to ensure real progress in scholarly research. Such a concept, although daring, will nevertheless draw together several results from the past decennia. It will evoke reactions ranging from enthusiastic applause to vigorous opposition. By doing so, it will not only restore momentum to the scholarly discussion, but it will also force the participants in this discussion to reassess and finally revise or sharpen their earlier views. Just such an integrated concept has been introduced to the scholarly debate with Wolfgang Grünstäudl's monograph and Jörg Frey's commentary on Second Peter, and everyone interested in early Christian literature may look forward to the large number of publications it will generate.

The following pages, rather than focusing on one single topic, will reflect on a number of central issues raised by Frey's recent work. They will critically evaluate his new perspective on Second Peter, add our own ideas, reflect on its place within, and its impact upon, the (history of) research on Second Peter, and identify areas that are ripe for further scholarly exploration. We will start our considerations with some remarks on the claim of literary dependence between Second Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. A second section will revisit Bauckham's assumption that, in the case of Second Peter, the fiction of Petrine authorship was entirely transparent to the recipients, while a third one will reexamine the identity of the πατέρες in 2 Peter 3:4. The fourth section will focus on the impact of an Egyptian origin on the identification of the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι, and a last paragraph will reflect on the position that the epistle of Jude may have had among the intended recipients of Second Peter.

4 Actually, it was the Epistle of Jude which, in 1975, was honoured with this title in an article by Douglas J. Rowston, "The Most Neglected Book in the New Testament," *NTS* 21 (1975): 554–63. A few years later, Tord Fornberg, complained in his monograph *An Early Church in a Pluralistic Society: A Study of 2 Peter*, ConBNT 9 (Lund: Gleerup, 1977), 1: "No significant monograph wholly or indeed mainly devoted to 2 Peter seems to have been published in recent decades." Meanwhile, the tide has turned. The books referred to in the second footnote are only part of the studies devoted to Second Peter since the time of Fornberg.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

1 Discourse vs. Dependence

Any survey of Second Peter's literary relationship to other writings has to realize the complexity and diversity of Second Peter's intertextual approaches. If anything has become clear from the numerous literary critical in-depth studies on Second Peter, it is that the lack of a certain number of common syllables cannot suffice as a criterion for denying literary dependence. The truth is: Second Peter treats the writings he knows in very different ways. On the one hand, he clearly hints at First Peter and a Pauline letter collection, but even after decades of scholarly discussion no consensus has been reached on the allegedly corresponding passages in First Peter (2 Pet 3:1) nor on the Pauline verses the author has in mind when phrasing 2 Pet 3:15. Perhaps we simply have to accept that the author of Second Peter, in his text processing practices, is adventurous enough to entirely rephrase a text passage he alludes to or to hint at common views without having a precise passage in mind. On the other hand, he processes and integrates virtually the whole of the epistle of Jude without unveiling the identity of his source to his readers. A third way of referring to another text is by characterizing it so vaguely that, despite all efforts, modern scholarship cannot unambiguously determine which writing he alludes to—if it is an already existing writing at all that he refers to when announcing that he 'will always remind' his readers 'of these things' (1:12). In view of this very particular way of referring to his textual universe, there is quite some plausibility and likelihood in the claim that Second Peter here hints at the Gospel of Mark, although proving this by tracing Markan text fragments in Second Peter is almost impossible.[5]

For the composition of his letter, Second Peter strings together clearly delimited—mostly topical—sections. For each of these sections, he uses generic models and, sometimes, specific texts. As a consequence, a reader or listener can feel reminded of one or more texts belonging to the same genre. 2 Pet 1:12–15, for instance, is modelled on farewell speeches and literary testaments.

5 In my doctoral thesis, later published as Martin G. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*, WUNT 2/300 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 586, I argued that, on the level of word use or syntax, nothing in the text of Second Peter suggested the author's acquaintance with the Gospel of Mark. During the defense of my thesis, Prof. Gerd Theißen held that Second Peter *did* know Mark's Gospel. I do not remember his arguments, but I maintained that there was no significant overlap in textual elements to prove this. However, I have not been able to get the question out of my mind. Grünstäudl's careful arguments on this point have convinced me that Second Peter's acquaintance with the Gospel of Mark is a plausible claim, cf. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 35–39.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

A *learned* reader will easily discover densely clustered motives, syntagmata and wordings that remind him of farewell speeches in Josephus or in Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, of Second Baruch, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Paul's farewell speech to the elders of Miletus in Acts 20 or some passages of the Pastoral Epistles. Beyond 2 Pet 1:12–15, links with these writings will occur only sparsely. The same holds true for the decretal language in 2 Pet 1:3–11, especially in the opening verses of the section,[6] for the Transfiguration scene in 1:16–18, for the eschatological discourse in 3:5–13, and for his use of the Epistle of Jude.

With respect to the Epistle of Jude, the main topical reason for integrating large parts of this letter into Second Peter's argument is the polemics against his opponents. Most of the textual borrowings from Jude can thus be found where Second Peter attacks his opponents, which is from 2 Pet 2:1 to 3:3.[7] Outside these verses, our author scarcely falls back on Jude's text. Suppose now that another author uses Second Peter, but only for issues treated in the first and third chapter. He is not interested in Second Peter's dispute with his opponents nor in the polemical attacks that result from it. It would not be surprising if no textual traces of Jude could be found in this writing. And yet just such a lack of textual contacts between Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter* has been used to weaken the view that this latter writing is dependent on Second Peter.[8] In the light of the above description of the literary structure of Second Peter, as a composition of delimited topical units each leaning on its own models, this cannot be considered a convincing argument.

On the other hand, not every argument that has been advanced in favour of the dependence of the *Apocalypse* on Second Peter has been convincing either. The fact that the *Apocalypse of Peter*, although supposedly dependent on the Synoptic tradition in the composition of the Transfiguration episode (E15–17/A4–20)[9] nevertheless changes the intention of this narrative, making it the prelude of a vision of the redeemed, is not a compelling argument for

6 Frederick W. Danker, "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree," *CBQ* 40 (1978): 64–82.

7 The points of contact between Jude and Second Peter are listed in Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015), 154–55.

8 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 138–139, 142.

9 The *Apocalypse of Peter* is quoted according to the following editions: Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988) and Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), E referring to the Ethiopic version, A to the Akhmim fragment, B to the Bodleian papyrus fragment and R to the Rainer papyrus fragment.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

dependence on Second Peter, which is said not to be dependent on the Synoptic tradition, but which preserves the intention of the scene.[10] It would be perfectly in line with Second Peter's attitude towards γραφή—which for him also comprises the authoritative writings of the apostles[11]—and his particular way of writing to react to an 'unauthorized' interpretation of a narrative by writing a version of this same narrative that is closer to his 'biblical' roots, without reusing much of the 'biblical' wording.

Richard Bauckham was right when, in his survey of the resemblances between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and Second Peter, he judged that some of the (alleged) points of contact are 'unremarkable' and others 'impressive only when considered as a group.'[12] Before speculating on the direction of a literary dependence, the resemblances between Second Peter and the *Apocalypse* should be examined, categorized and carefully weighed in order to determine their significance. If we accept the view that the Rainer and the Bodleian fragments represent the most ancient version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* that we have at the moment, that the Ethiopian translation approximately reflects the *Apocalypse* as written in the second century, albeit in a not very literal translation, and that the Akhmim fragment is a later edition which cannot contribute to the question of the relationship between Second Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* to the same degree as the other two, the resemblances could be roughly classified as follows:

1. Second Peter and the *Apocalypse* share traditions of theological terminology. Both of them use the notion ὁδός in such expressions as ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας (2 Pet 2:2), ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς δικαιοσύνης/the way of righteousness (2 Pet 2:21, E7:2; cf. A22, A28),[13] ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁδός (B verso, lines 12–13; cf. A34), εὐθεῖα ὁδός and ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ Βαλαάμ (2 Pet 2:15).[14] Both qualify the βασιλεία as αἰώνιος and attribute the βασιλεία to Christ, rather than to God (2 Pet 1:11, E14:2 = R14:2). Both combine the call and election of the believers (τὴν κλῆσιν καὶ ἐκλογήν, 2 Pet 1:10; τοῖς κλητοῖς μου καὶ ἐκλεκτοῖς R14:1) in the same theological context, that is the

10 Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 302–3.

11 Martin G. Ruf, "Elective Affinity: Second Peter's Reception of Paul," in *Authoritative Texts and Reception History: Aspects and Approaches*, ed. Dan Batovici and Kristin De Troyer, Biblical Interpretation 151 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 168–74.

12 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 302.

13 There are more examples of ὁδός-terminology in the Akhmim fragment than in the Ethiopic version. It is not evident whether this is an accentuation by the author of the Akhmim version or a more precise rendering of the original wording.

14 This last example ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ Βαλαάμ is inspired by ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ Καίν in Jude 11. The Epistle of Jude also shares this terminology.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

entry into Christ's kingdom. The Ethiopian version calls Christ 'God' (E16:1.4) as does Second Peter (2 Pet 1:1), and both refer to the day of judgment as 'the day of God' (E4:1, 2 Pet 3:12).

2. Some of these examples exceed the limits of shared theological terminology; they are theological concepts, expressed in the same way, as is the case for the 'eternal kingdom of Christ'. Moreover, the *Apocalypse* and Second Peter share such theological thoughts and concepts as the eschatological conflagration (E5:2–4; 2 Pet 3:7.10.12), the parallel role of God's word in creation and the end of the world (E4:4–5; 2 Pet 3:5.7) and the notion of the 'promises' of Christ (R14:3; E14:3; 2 Pet 2:4).

3. Both writings mention similar non-Synoptic details in the same 'biblical' episode. Different as the meaning of the transfiguration narrative in Second Peter and the *Apocalypse* may be, they both locate the scene on the 'Holy' Mountain (E15:1; 2 Pet 1:18), a detail which does not originate from the Synoptic versions of the episode. In both writings, the voice comes from heaven (E17:1; 2 Pet 1:18) rather than from a cloud, and maybe also the recurrence of the possessive pronoun in the wording of the message from heaven (2 Pet 1:17: ὁ υἱός *μου* ὁ ἀγαπητός *μου*) is reflected in the Ethiopian version of the *Apocalypse* (E17:1).

4. The portraits of Peter show similar traits. In both writings, he receives revelations from Christ (R14:3, 2 Pet 1:14; in both cases the verb δηλόω is used) and he is informed about his impending death (R14:4; E14:4; 2 Pet 1:14). 'Peter' uses the (not unusual) combination of nouns 'honour and glory' in the *Apocalypse* in order to describe what, according to his vision on the Holy Mountain, will be bestowed on the righteous ones (E16:5) and in Second Peter to indicate what Christ received from the Father on the very same Holy Mountain (2 Pet 1:17).

5. Finally, and perhaps least strikingly, some activities of the opponents in Second Peter could recall the punished groups of people in the *Apocalypse*. According to Second Peter, the opponents 'lure the unstable souls' (2 Pet 2:14) and in the *Apocalypse*, women hung by their neck are said to have promenaded for adultery in order to 'capture the soul' of men (E7:5–6). Other women are incriminated for having 'blasphemed the way of righteousness' (E7:2/A22, E9:2/A28) and Second Peter warns that, because of the people who will follow the 'depraved conduct' of the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι, ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς ἀληθείας βλασφημηθήσεται (2 Pet 2:2).

The points of contact between the two writings have been inventoried and discussed on various occasions,[15] more often than not with the question in mind of whether they can inform us about the direction of a literary

15 Richard Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," begins his survey with a short History of Scholarship (pp. 290–293).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

dependence between the two writings. At least in some cases, this guiding question may have led to premature conclusions. I doubt whether the *types* of contacts, as described above, permit a conclusion on their dependence at all. If every instance of resemblance is analyzed, described, and weighed very carefully, the plausibility of claiming literary dependence might increase, but still then, the evidence might neither be broad nor specific enough to prove literary dependence, let alone its direction. On the other hand, in the light of the *types* of 'parallels' as listed above, the conclusion seems inevitable that there *is* a connection between Second Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. They share traditions of theological terminology, they express theological concepts in the same way, they mention the same non-Synoptic details when referring to Synoptic episodes, and their portraits of Peter show similar traits. They both seem, at least occasionally, to contribute to the same (theological) discourse. The—admittedly vague—concept of discourse appears to be the most careful and applicable description of the evidence provided by the textual contacts. It leaves open the question of the chronological order. Trying to reconstruct this discourse, in a *further* step, by examining not only the textual evidence, but also looking for a plausible historical situation including time, place, and milieu can furnish a plausible suggestion for the question of literary dependence. Part of the merits of the 'new perspective' on Second Peter, as developed by Grünstäudl and Frey, is that, in addition to their defense of the dependence of Second Peter on the *Apocalypse*, they have tried to bring to light the historical embeddedness of the writings and discourse in which they participate: Grünstäudl has suggested a plausible situation for Second Peter's reaction to the *Apocalypse* in the time of Clement of Alexandria, and Frey has fathomed the impact of this situation on our understanding of Second Peter.[16]

2 Transparency Not Intended

Doubts about the authenticity of Second Peter have been raised ever since the time of Origen. More often than not, it was rather a matter of utter conviction of its fictitiousness than of mere doubts. Broader research on the various forms

16 In the third chapter of his dissertation, entitled *Petrus Receptus* (pp. 184–233), Grünstäudl draws attention to the reception of Second Peter. As he does not find any trace of Second Peter's existence before the end of the second century and, in the west of Europe, not even in the third century, he turns his search to Egypt, Origen being the first undisputed witness of the existence of Second Peter. The fourth chapter, from which the whole book has borrowed its title, *Petrus Alexandrinus* (pp. 234–286), sketches a possible situation that may have led to the composition of Second Peter.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of pseudonymous writing in antiquity during the past decades has given a place in the history of literature to early Christian pseudepigraphy and has elucidated the conditions of its origins, but this has not been able completely to remove the tension, felt by many, between the generally high moral standards of early Christianity and this form of literary fraud. One of the most amply discussed suggestions, which would have solved this problem for Second Peter, was Bauckham's claim that 'the Petrine authorship was intended to be an entirely transparent fiction.'[17] The new perspective on Second Peter, offered by Grünstäudl and Frey, concentrates, continues and sharpens another line of thinking, completing the picture with some details that arise from the epistle's alleged dependence on the *Apocalypse* and the origins of the writing in Egypt.

In one of his first publications on Second Peter,[18] Frey stressed the massive claim of Petrine authority in Second Peter. Again and again throughout the letter, the reader (or listener) is reminded of the Petrine authorship and of Peter's authoritative position. The letter prescript introduces the alleged writer with the solemn Hebraizing form Συμεὼν Πέτρος (instead of the more common Σίμων Πέτρος) and the extended self-presentation 'servant and apostle of Jesus Christ' (1:1). Peter figures as a spokesman of the apostles, suggested by the 'apostolic plural' (1:1,16,18). His theological positions, reportedly also expounded in his first letter (3:1), claim to be nothing more than a reminder of what the prophets and all the apostles said (3:2) and, as a matter of course, are completely in harmony with Paul's views (3:16). This insistent classification of his views as common and orthodox serves the same aim as the emphasis placed on Peter's being an eyewitness during the only 'biographical' episode mentioned in the letter: Jesus' transfiguration (1:16–18). Both highlight (Second) Peter's legitimacy and authority to teach. Fashioning the whole writing as a literary testament of Peter (1:12–15) gives the letter the special importance and forcefulness inherent to the last words of an authoritative figure. Pseudepigraphical fiction is thus a consciously and thoroughly applied literary device throughout the letter. Only the introductory (1:3–11), polemical (2:1–22) and argumentative (3:3–13) passages are free from explicit references to the alleged writer's authority.

Frey sketches the picture of a well-versed writer who knows how to create pseudepigraphical fiction and consistently maintain it. The time levels, i.e. the fictional time frame on the one hand and the time period of the real author's

17 Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 134.

18 Jörg Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, ed. Jörg Frey et al., WUNT 246 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 683–732.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

situation on the other, are in most cases clearly separated: where necessary, the real author makes Peter use the future to speak of the situation in his, the real author's, present time.[19] That the characterization of the heterodox teachers passes into the use of the present tense from 2:10 does not remain unnoticed to Frey, but for him, this does not disturb the fiction or qualify the author as a dilettante unable to maintain the fiction. This is quite a remarkable change in the perception of the person of the author as compared to earlier views, which tended to highlight how easily the pseudepigrapher gives himself away by making all kinds of mistakes in the use of tenses and cutting through the fiction by means of anachronisms. The research of recent decades into the author's language and literary universe seems to have strengthened the trust in his literary competence, so that some well-known observations on the text can now be interpreted differently.

In the light of the author's massive endeavour to establish and promote Petrine authority, Bauckham's claim of an 'entirely transparent fiction' is not convincing.[20] Someone who does not have enough confidence in the persuasive power of his argument, and goes all out to buttress it with the highest apostolic and spiritual authority possible, does not intend his fiction to be seen through. However, there were groups or at least individuals in early Christianity who not only knew of the phenomenon of fictional authorship, but also knew how to use it, as is shown by the example of Second Peter, which strongly suggests that there were also possible readers who could recognize a writing as fiction. A more nuanced version of the transparency hypothesis would assume that a pseudepigrapher had to expect different groups of readers or listeners. Most of them would not see through the fiction, but a minority could be educated and skilled enough to do so, as has been proposed by Hans-Josef Klauck.[21]

In Second Peter we can easily discern two groups in the actual situation of the community. On the one hand, there are the teachers stigmatized by the author as ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι (2:1). They could obviously read the Pauline letters and the other Scriptures and interpreted them (3:15)—just as the author himself did. Their level of education may have been similar to the author's. The second group in the community are those who are taught by the so-called ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι. They are more numerous (πολλοί [2:2]) and do not study the Pauline letters and other Scriptures themselves. They listen to the teachings of

19 Ibid., 709–10.

20 Ibid., 729–30.

21 Hans-Josef Klauck, *Die antike Briefliteratur und das Neue Testament* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1998), 304–5; English edition: *Ancient Letters and the New Testament* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor Univ. Press, 2006), 404–6.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι when they promise them freedom (2:19), which could be part of their interpretation of Paul. The author of Second Peter does not invite them to reassess these teachings by critically reading and thinking for themselves; rather he denigrates what they have learned as 'destructive heresies' (αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας [2:2]) and 'distortions' (cf. στρεβλώσουσιν [3:15]) of Paul and the Scriptures, and the teachers as 'untaught' (ἀμαθεῖς [3:16]). Even where he highlights the reliability and divine origin of biblical prophecy (1:19–21), his words do not suggest that the members of this second group were able to read these prophecies themselves. Our author feels the necessity to remind them of what is written elsewhere (3:1–2) and to explain to them what they should expect in the end times according to the Scriptures (3:5–10). They seem to play a kind of 'passive' role, they are 'enticed' by the teachers (cf. δελεάζουσιν [2:14]) and they will follow (ἐξακολουθήσουσιν [2:2]) their teachings and behaviour. It is to this group that 'Peter' addresses his letter; the Epistle of Second Peter is our author's attempt to teach this group.

The ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι seem to have chosen another setting for their teaching: Frey interprets the words 'while they feast with you' (συνευωχούμενοι ὑμῖν, 2:13) as referring to private dinners for which the addressees have been invited by the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι.[22] Their teaching may have been mainly oral. The fact that our author chose a written form of teaching, apparently without expecting that the addressees would read it themselves, suggests that he intended his letter to be read aloud to them. The sound effects of certain wordings in the letter, the obvious stylistic design and the speech registers used[23] hint in the same direction. In view of the author's evident desire for a reception side by side with other authoritative early Christian writings and as a reminder of the words of the prophets,[24] it is fairly reasonable to assume that he intended his letter to be read in the same way and setting as the γραφαί.

Taking into account the massive Petrine fiction in the writing and the addressees' presumably less than elevated level of education, they were certainly not supposed to see through the pseudepigraphic fiction. The other teachers' education may have enabled them to do so, but they are not the (main)

22 Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 713.

23 E.g. ἀπάταις in 2:13, a deliberate allusion to the similar sounding ἀγάπαις ridiculing and unmasking the 'true' character of what the teachers are doing; the *figura etymologica* ἐν ἐμπαιγμονῇ ἐμπαΐκται in 3:3 or the remarkable word formation παραφρονία which recalls the sound of παρανομία in the same verse 2:16. The solemn style in some passages, the use of 'biblical' phrasing and the 'quotation' of the opponents' view in 3:4 would also be particularly effective if the text was read aloud.

24 Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 598–604; Ruf, "Elective Affinity: Second Peter's Reception of Paul," (168-)174.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

addressees. In the text of Second Peter, there is no evidence that our author wanted his intended audience (whether readers or listeners) to recognize and appreciate his fabrication.[25]

3 Teachers, the Recently Converted and 'The Fathers'

The teachings of the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι seem to have found adherents especially amongst members of the community who had converted from paganism a short time before (2:19–22). According to Frey, this could hint at catechetical activities on the part of the heterodox teachers.[26] It is obvious that the teachers themselves must have belonged to the community for quite some time. While Jude charges those whom he considers unorthodox teachers with 'having crept in' among the addressees (verse 4), Second Peter does not dissociate himself from the other teachers in the same way. In his adapted version of Jude 3, Second Peter announces that the other teachers will 'insinuate heresies,' but they will not come from outside the group. They will 'be among them' (2:1).

In their argument against the impending imminence of eschatological events, these teachers hold that 'since the fathers (οἱ πατέρες) fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation' (3:4). Many scholars think that οἱ πατέρες refers to the first generation of Christians and see a connection with the hope of this first generation that the last things would happen in their times, as expressed in Jesus' prediction that 'this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place' (Mark 13:30). If this interpretation is correct, the teachers would place themselves in the line of the Christian tradition, the first generation for them being 'the fathers'. They may have been members of the community for quite some time (otherwise they would not have become teachers) and have begun to doubt some of the promises made to the first generation of Christians.

As many commentators explicitly state, a similar thought can be found in First and Second Clement, in both of which it is cast as a quotation:[27] 'Wretched are they who are of a double mind, and of a doubting heart; who say, "These things we have heard even in the times of our fathers; but, behold, we have grown old, and none of them has happened to us."'[28] Whether or not

25 Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 729–30.

26 Frey, *Brief*, 191.

27 In 1 Clem 23:3 it figures as ἡ γραφὴ αὕτη ὅπου λέγει and in 2 Clem 11:2 as ὁ προφητικὸς λόγος.

28 Quoted from 1 Clem 23:3, translation by Roberts-Donaldson. The wording of the quotation is slightly different in First and Second Clement, but the congruence is more than 70 percent so that there can be no doubt that it is the same quotation in both writings.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Second Peter was inspired by the same writing when phrasing the heterodox teachers' theological views in 3:4,[29] what is interesting for our purposes is the difference between Second Peter and the Clementine letters in their reference to the πατέρες. The δίψυχοι in First and Second Clement's source refer to the things they have heard in the times of their fathers (ἐπὶ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν). They have become tired of waiting because, during their own lifetime, they have not experienced what they heard in the times of the generation before them. The ἐμπαῖκται in Second Peter begin to lose their patience because they do not see the fulfilment of the promise of His coming. Since the death of *the* fathers (οἱ πατέρες) everything seems to go on as it has since the beginning of the world. Of course, both Bauckham and Frey have seen the difference between '*the*' fathers in Second Peter and '*our*' fathers in the Clementine letters. And both know that, with regard to πατέρες, early Christian parlance usually continues Jewish idiom where πατέρες indicates the patriarchs.[30] Nevertheless, with many other commentators, they both hold that πατέρες in 2 Pet 3:4 refers to 'the first Christian generation' (Bauckham): the witnesses and contemporaries of Jesus, as Frey adds.[31] As much as Frey distances himself from Bauckham concerning the alleged common source,[32] for both of them, the Clementine Epistles are the main point of reference for the interpretation of πατέρες in 2 Pet 3:4.

This view is not without alternative. Once the idea has been abandoned that the main problem at stake is one of different Christian generations, an intertextual reference to the *Apocalypse of Baruch* could shed light upon the genesis and interpretation of the words of the ἐμπαῖκται. Their doubts are caused by the fact that the promise (ἡ ἐπαγγελία) of God's (or Christ's) coming (τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ) fails to be fulfilled. When Second Peter revisits this question in 3:9, the author does not deny the problem, but advises the addressees to regard this as a sign of God's being patient (μακροθυμεῖν) and not of His slowness (βραδύτης), with a short side glance at those who do so, i.e. the ἐμπαῖκται. The scoffers' main argument is the unchanged continuity (οὕτως διαμένει) of the

29 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 284–285 and 290f. identifies the writing quoted as the lost Book of Eldad and Modad, following a suggestion made by Lightfoot. Frey, *Brief*, 319–20 holds that it is impossible to prove that Second Peter used a source in 3:4, following Grünstäudl's analysis in *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 187–191. Taking into account the various ways in which Second Peter has reworked other texts', I would argue that Second Peter may have known the source of First and Second Clement, but that it would not be wise to identify the scoffers' words as a quotation from any writing. Second Peter does not quote. On the wording of the scoffers' complaint in 2 Pet 3:4, see Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 489–501.

30 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 290f.; Frey, *Brief*, 322–23.

31 Frey, *Brief*, 323.

32 See p. 28–29 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

world (πάντα) as it has been from the beginning of creation (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως) after the death of the πατέρες (3:4). The same misinterpretation, embraced by some people, namely that God's long-suffering is weakness, based on the perception that God has not accomplished what He promised and that 'that which is corruptible remains,' figures in Baruch's prayer in the *Apocalypse of Baruch* (2 Bar. 21:19–25). Not only do the elements of impatience because of the continuity of the world, the absence of judgment, and the misinterpretation of God's patience connect this text to our verses from Second Peter, but so also do the creation of the world and the patriarchs' sleeping. As different as the combination of these motives may seem in comparison to our text, e.g., the world is said to have been created on account of the patriarchs and people like them who are now asleep, it is worth asking whether the mention of the πατέρες' having fallen asleep in Second Peter does not hint at the patriarchs' waiting for resurrection, as in Second Baruch.[33]

A possible confirmation of the role of the patriarchs in Baruch's prayer for the understanding of Second Peter can be found in none other than the *Apocalypse of Peter*. First of all, the day of His coming in the *Apocalypse* is the day of the resurrection of the dead (E prologue) and the day of judgment (E4:2.9). The patriarchs are mentioned several times. Christ and his elect will rejoice with the patriarchs in his eternal kingdom (E14:2; R14:2: μετὰ τῶν πατριαρχῶν). On the Holy Mountain, when Moses and Elijah appear, Peter asks Jesus where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other righteous *fathers* are (E16:1). Jesus makes him see a garden with a tree that constantly brings forth new fruit. Jesus finishes the glimpse he allows Peter with the words: 'Now you have seen the patriarchs.' (E16:4). *Fathers* in 16:1 continues the list of patriarchs, and the Ethiopic word for patriarchs contains the two letters meaning father.[34] Unfortunately, the Akhmim fragment cannot furnish any information about the role of the patriarchs in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but the evidence of the Ethiopic version and the Rainer fragment suffice to show that the patriarchs have an important place in the eschatological expectations of the circles that brought forth the writing.

If the assumption is correct that the *Apocalypse of Peter* and Second Peter originate from a similar or the same theological milieu and that these writings contribute to the same theological discourse, taking into account the witness of the *Apocalypse* for the reading and interpretation of Second Peter is a valid method. In this regard, we only have begun to ponder what a literary

33 On Second Baruch 21.19–25 as an intertext for 2 Pet 3:4 see also Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 495.

34 On the meaning of the word 'patriarchs' see Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 369.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

dependence of these two Petrine writings, or at least their common membership in the same discourse, can mean for the exegesis of Second Peter.

4 Egypt and the Return to Gnosticism

As we have seen above, it seems reasonable to assume that some recipients were able to see through the Petrine fiction, while the majority did not. Klauck, in his monograph on letter writing in Antiquity and the New Testament, sees this bipartite reception mirrored in the social structures of Gnostic circles: 'Later in church history the orthodox church fathers record prominent examples where some potentially explosive insights were reserved for a knowledgeable elite of the true "Gnostics," both orthodox and heterodox, who could handle them, but were kept away from the "simple" church folks who supposedly could not.'[35] Scholars in recent decades have become particularly reluctant to recognize Gnostic groups in Second Peter's polemics against his opponents, having almost abandoned the optimistic attitude of earlier generations towards the possibility of identifying the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι with a group otherwise known from second and third century authors.[36] Yet Grünstäudl brings Gnosticism back to scholarly debate. The main obstacle to a well-founded identification is the lack of reliably described characteristics of the opponents; Second Peter's evidence is incomplete and in most cases polemical which makes it difficult to recognize clear-cut Gnostic features.[37] A second reason for scholarly hesitation has been chronology. If dated to the first or early second century, Second Peter precedes most descriptions of Gnostic groups, which leads to cautious designations of the opponents' doctrines as pre-Gnostic ideas.[38]

35 Klauck, *Ancient Letters and the New Testament*, 405–406.

36 A glimpse into the history of the scholarly identification of the opponents is offered by Frey, *Brief*, 192–195. In one of the main German commentaries on Second Peter and Jude from the 1990s, neither 'Gnosticism' nor 'Carpocratians' made their way into the index of subjects, see Anton Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*, EKK 22 (Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994), 279–81, which may indicate how little importance was attached to a discussion of possibly Gnostic features of the opponents.

37 Charles Bigg's statement at the beginning of the twentieth century is symptomatic: 'It cannot be denied that Colossians and the Pastoral Epistles are much more anti-Gnostic than 2 Peter or Jude,' Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 239.

38 Eric Fuchs and Pierre Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre, l'épître de saint Jude*, CNT 13b (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1988), 28: 'Il est hautement probable qu'on trouve là l'écho de ce spiritualisme annonciateur du gnosticisme si souvent évoqué et combattu dans des textes de cette époque.'

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

With Second Peter's possible origin in Alexandria and in the times of Clement of Alexandria, Gnosticism enters the discussion again, albeit in careful terms. Grünstäudl connects Second Peter's insistence on γνῶσις/ἐπίγνωσις and apostolic authority to the 'apostolisch abgesicherte Gnosis des Clemens' and compares conflicts from the second half of the second century, such as Clement's polemical discussion with the Carpocratians, to Second Peter's disputes with the heterodox teachers.[39] Although Frey tends to follow Grünstäudl with regard to Second Peter's dependence on the *Apocalypse* and its origin in educated circles in Alexandria, he remains, in line with many scholars of the last few decades, more reluctant in labelling Second Peter's opponents.[40] Based mainly on Second Peter's cosmological ideas on deluge and conflagration, but also on some statements concerning a conception of a non-intervening God, Frey picks up another line of discussion, i.e. the possible philosophical context of the cosmological discourses of Stoics and Epicureans.[41] This philosophical discourse characterizes the educated milieu for which Second Peter writes; Frey does not identify the opponents as Epicureans nor Second Peter as Stoic.[42] To what extent scholarly opinion will be inclined to accept a Gnostic identity of the ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι will very much depend on how the idea of an Egyptian origin of Second Peter in the time of Clement will be received.

A growing plausibility and acceptance of an Egyptian origin will not depend on Second Peter's possible relationship with (the time of) Clement of Alexandria alone. A strong argument can be found in the reception of ideas which circulated mainly or exclusively in Egypt, such as the adoption of the idea of conflagration into Jewish thought. If the Sibylline Oracles—according to Frey the only Jewish texts that adopt the idea of a cosmic destruction of the whole world by fire[43]—indeed originated in Egypt, this would support the claim of Second Peter's connection with Egypt without, however, proving it.

Further support could come from the recent discussion on the origin of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. For almost two decades, Bauckham's view that this

39 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 293f.

40 Frey, *Brief*, 195.

41 See pp. 36–38 in the present volume.

42 Jerome H. Neyrey made a strong point of the Epicurean character of the opponents' ideas, see Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 37C (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 122–28.

43 See p. 37 in the present volume. Frey draws upon an article by Pieter W. van der Horst, "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity," in *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 271–92.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

writing 'derives from Palestinian Christianity during the Bar Kokhba war'[44] dominated scholarly discussion. In 2003, Rome was suggested by Peter van Minnen as a 'good candidate' for the place of composition, due to Peter's martyrdom in Rome and the fact that the *Apocalypse* figures in the Muratorian fragment.[45] At the same time, Eibert Tigchelaar put forward the idea of an Egyptian source, adapted by the author of the *Apocalypse*.[46] In 2010, Bremmer concluded that there were two possibilities of equal plausibility: either the *Apocalypse* was 'first written in Palestine but revised by a Jewish-Christian author who used an Egyptian source' or it was written 'in Egypt on the basis of a Palestinian text'.[47] It is not the first time that an Egyptian provenance enters the discussion. At the end of the 19th century, Albrecht Dieterich collected the Didache, Pseudo-Phocylides, the second book of the Sibylline Oracles and the *Apocalypse of Peter* under the comprehensive label 'eine in ihrer Eigenart gar nicht zu verkennende, eine ägyptisch-christliche Litteratur, hauptsächlich der ersten Hälfte des zweiten Jahrhunderts'.[48] Dieterich based his observations on the Akhmim fragment. He died in 1908, about the time when the Ethiopic text began to attract scholarly attention.[49] However, much of his learned survey of the tradition history of the Akhmim fragment is not invalidated by the priority of the Ethiopian version.

Of course, the *Apocalypse of Peter* need not have been composed in Egypt in order to have served as a source for Second Peter. But the presence of ideas that fit an Egyptian context makes Egypt an obvious candidate for the place of the discourse in which Second Peter and the *Apocalypse* participate.

---

44 Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160. This essay was originally published in *Apocrypha* 5 (1994), 7–111.

45 Peter van Minnen, "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 29–30.

46 Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 72, 75.

47 Jan N. Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 308–9. See also the chapter by Bremmer in the present volume.

48 Albrecht Dieterich, *Nekyia. Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1893, second edition: 1913, reprint 1969), 190.

49 Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 104.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

5 And What Shall This Man Do?

Countless contributions to the discussion on the literary relationship between Jude and Second Peter restrict themselves to the, more or less compelling, examination of their literary dependence. Once they have reached a conclusion on the direction, they abandon their meditation on the textual relationship, satisfied with having an idea of the beginning of their relationship, i.e. the emergence of the latter one of the two writings. But what about the—admittedly even more hypothetical—situation in which both writings have come into existence and are circulating?

Suppose we are right in following Frey's view that the 'bold construction of a Petrine testament'[50] did not intend transparency and that the listeners' education did not reach far enough to see through the pseudepigraphic fiction. Still, it is hardly conceivable that they would not recognize the textual similarities between Jude and Second Peter. Realizing that for Jude, certain intruders who 'change the grace of our God into a license of immorality and deny Jesus Christ' (4) are a current problem, while in Second Peter the similarly characterized false teachers who will introduce 'destructive heresies' (2:1) are part of his prophecies, they would have to conclude that Second Peter was written *before* Jude. Futurizing Jude's current situation makes Jude the later letter. Moreover, on the level of pseudepigraphic fiction, it might be more conceivable that Jude, brother of the Lord, who explicitly hints at apostles' prophecies (17), would borrow from Peter, the most prominent apostle, than it would be the other way round.[51]

But is this a realistic scenario? Can the author of Second Peter have intended Jude to be read side by side with his own writing? As we have seen above, the author changes Jude's words in order to make what now appears to be his prophecy fit his actual situation. The ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι are not intruders, as they were in Jude's community, but a group of teachers within the community who introduce foreign doctrines. Why would Second Peter still want Jude to be read once his own writing has achieved what the author aimed at, namely that Peter's testament be read? There are other parts of Second Peter which can raise doubts about an intended parallel existence of both writings.

50 Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 702. The boldness, for Frey, consists in the fiction of being an eyewitness in order to supply his views and words with the authority to reject the reproach of having followed cleverly invented—*fictitious*—myths (1:16).

51 The alleged author of the Epistle of Jude has to be identified as Jude, brother of Jesus and James. From the times of Tertullian, the fictitious author has been found in Jude, one of the Twelve; see Frey, *Brief*, 17–20.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

'Peter' wants his recipients to recall 'the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles' (3:2), while Jude calls on his addressees to 'remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold' (17). Obviously, it was not enough for the author to base his views on the apostles' prophecies; his range of authoritative writings is broader. That was why he changed Jude's text. So why should he still wish Jude to be read despite considering Jude's theological position to be insufficient? The most plausible conclusion seems to me that Second Peter wanted to replace Jude or, if Jude was unknown to his community, he did not want this writing to come into use. Unlike many other scholars, Frey has thought about this problem. In the light of the extensive use Second Peter makes of Jude, a text which is much less 'legitimated' by pseudonymity than his own writing, of which he repeatedly highlights the legitimation and authority, it is not probable that his addressees were acquainted with the Epistle of Jude.[52]

Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli, stated Terentianus Maurus in the very same century when Second Peter came into being. *Books have a fate of their own—according to the capacity of the reader.* Clement of Alexandria already commented on Jude, while there may perhaps be, in his works, faint traces of the milieus that may have brought Second Peter into existence.[53] Origen considered Jude to be the Lord's brother, while he reports on doubts about Second Peter's authenticity. Jude figures in the Muratorian fragment, where there is no hint of Second Peter. Second Peter, then, clearly did not succeed in replacing Jude in the first centuries of their existence, nor did he do so later. By the second half of the fourth century, Jude had gained 'canonical' status in most of the churches, with the exception of Syria,[54] while Second Peter faced many more difficulties on its way into the canon. A parallel reception history of both writings or, better, a history of their relationship through the centuries, would be very worth reading.

52 Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," 727. In his commentary, Frey, following Grünstäudl, adds: Second Peter originates from a (theological) milieu into which Jude had already made its way, but Frey doubts whether the author supposed his recipients to know the Epistle of Jude. If they did, they would most probably have read Jude as a confirmation of Peter's words; see Frey, *Brief*, 162. Rudolf Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä*, 7th ed., KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912), 257 also saw the problem and concluded: If Jude was written in Syria, this cannot be the place where Second Peter originated.

53 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 236–286.

54 Frey, *Brief*, 7.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

6 Not a Conclusion

Richard Bauckham, and the many scholars who accepted his ideas, drew attention to the parallels in phrasing and thinking between Second Peter and the Apostolic fathers, particularly those connected with Rome. We have learned to recognize their theological points of contact. Wolfgang Grünstäudl and Jörg Frey highlight the ideas Second Peter shares with Eastern, and particularly Egyptian, literature, while they pay less attention to its western contacts than Bauckham did. Future research will have to ponder both 'directions' of literary contacts and find a balance. A thorough methodological, or, rather, criteriological reflection on the categories of literary contacts and their relevance for the determination of the place of origin would be highly desirable.

More than many others, Frey succeeds in making Second Peter speak into a tangible situation. His reconstruction of a plausible context of theological thought, and his evocation of a distinct picture in the mind of the reader of what might have happened in the social fabric for which Second Peter was intended, is a considerable step not only for scholarly research, but also for Second Peter's use in contemporary Christianity. A clear picture of what Second Peter may have intended to contribute to the discussions of his day can help us to ponder whether, and how, his words can be useful to thought and life in the present day.

What makes this reading of Second Peter particularly appealing and attractive is its ability to correct erroneous views and shed light on questions that have puzzled generations of scholars. One of the most striking examples is 2 Pet 3:10. The prophecy that 'the works on earth will be found' seemed so incomprehensible to the editors of the *Editio Critica Maior* that they changed it to 'will not be found,' following a reading attested only in the Sahidic translation and in some manuscripts of the Philoxenian version. The *Apocalypse*, however, describes how after the conflagration 'the works of each one of them will stand before them' (E6:3). In both Petrine writings, the works will survive the cosmic catastrophe. There is no need to deny their being found in 2 Pet 3:10.

The new perspective on Second Peter does not, of course, offer an exhaustive solution to all the problems and questions posed by Second Peter. Nor is it able to explain every literary connection between Second Peter and its textual universe. Why is it, for instance, that in extant early Christian literature only Second Peter and Luke apply the form Συμεών to Peter's name (2 Pet 1:1; Acts 15:14)? Should this be explained in terms of comparable literary skills? Or of a similar literary education? Such remaining questions provide an incentive for new ideas and theories, or for reviving and amplifying old ones. The benefits of doing so have been amply demonstrated by Frey and Grünstäudl. Until such time as someone, inspired by the remaining questions, volunteers to supply us

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

with a thorough and compelling survey of another, more plausible, context of Second Peter in second century Christianity, Frey and Grünstäudl's new perspective on Second Peter is a highly reasonable, well-reflected working hypothesis which has the potential to inspire many scholars in their approach to the epistle, to make them ask different questions of familiar material and to see old questions in a new light.

Bibliography

Abbott, Edwin A. "On the Second Epistle of Peter." *Expositor* 3 (1882): 49–63, 139–153, 204–219.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bigg, Charles. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*. ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901.

Bockmuehl, Markus. *Simon Peter in Scripture and Memory: The New Testament Apostle in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker, 2012.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, edited by Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, and Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Danker, Frederick W. "2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree." *CBQ* 40 (1978): 64–82.

Dieterich, Albrecht. *Nekyia. Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1893.

Fornberg, Tord. *An Early Church in a Pluralistic Society: A Study of 2 Peter*. ConBNT 9. Lund: Gleerup, 1977.

Frey, Jörg. "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, edited by Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Clare K. Rothschild, and Michaela Engelmann, 683–732. WUNT 246. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Fuchs, Eric, and Pierre Reymond. *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre, l'épître de saint Jude*. CNT 13b. Genève: Labor et Fides, 1988.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Horst, Pieter W. van der. "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity." In *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction*, 227–51. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994.

Klauck, Hans-Josef. *Ancient Letters and the New Testament*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor Univ. Press, 2006.

Klauck, Hans-Josef. *Die antike Briefliteratur und das Neue Testament*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1998.

Knopf, Rudolf. *Die Briefe Petri und Judä*. 7th ed. KEK. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912.

Kraus, Thomas J. *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/136. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Lapham, Fred. *Peter: The Myth, the Man and the Writings: A Study of Early Petrine Text and Tradition*. JSNTSup 239. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.

Minnen, Peter van. "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 15–39. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Neyrey, Jerome H. *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37C. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

Rowston, Douglas J. "The Most Neglected Book in the New Testament." *NTS* 21 (1975): 554–63.

Ruf, Martin G. *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*. WUNT 2/300. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Ruf, Martin G. "Elective Affinity: Second Peter's Reception of Paul." In *Authoritative Texts and Reception History: Aspects and Approaches*, edited by Dan Batovici and Kristin De Troyer, 168–74. Biblical Interpretation 151. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016.

Schmidt, Karl Matthias. *Mahnung und Erinnerung im Maskenspiel: Epistolographie, Rhetorik und Narrativik der pseudepigraphen Petrusbriefe*. HBS 38. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003.

Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "Is the Liar Bar Kokhba? Considering the Date and Provenance of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 63–77. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Vögtle, Anton. *Der Judasbrief, Der zweite Petrusbrief*. EKK 22. Zürich; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger; Neukirchener, 1994.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 9

Does the *Apocalypse of Peter* Help to Determine the Date of 2 Peter?

Paul Foster

1 Introduction

Jörg Frey has produced what can only be described as a splendid and magisterial commentary on Jude and 2 Peter. Specifically, in relation to 2 Peter, which will be the focus of the discussion in what follows, he has presented a ground-breaking treatment of that text. In particular, he offers lucid exegetical insights, a sympathetic reading of the theology of the epistle, and a fresh historical and contextual placement of this enigmatic writing.[1] His introduction and commentary on this writing will be consulted for generations to come, and scholars and interested readers alike will draw from his deep learning and insights with much profit. There is indeed much to praise, but nothing more so than the evident commitment to open enquiry and a desire to be guided solely by the weight of textual and contextual evidence wherever that may lead. This is, therefore, a model of scholarship from a person whom I regard both as a good friend and a leading researcher within the field of New Testament studies. In the same vein, Jörg Frey's Radboud Prestige Lectures in New Testament, published in this volume (chapter 2), exemplify that same spirit of irenic, evidence-based scholarship, which is something to which all scholars should aspire.

In these lectures, Frey presents three carefully articulated new perspectives on the letter. In turn these are first, the literary relations that 2 Peter might share with other texts—with special focus on the relationship with the *Apocalypse of Peter*; second, a fresh exploration of the eschatology of the epistle which is a central topic of concern for the author; and third, consideration of the ethics of the letter with particular focus on the interplay with soteriology, since this has often been a source of criticism in relation to the author's thought.[2] In this

1 Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015).

2 The thought of the letter has been characterized as 'un-Christian in spirit.' See Edwin A. Abbott, "Appendix V: The Second Epistle of St. Peter Contrasted with the Gospel of John," in

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_010
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

discussion here, it is the first of these three foci that will be examined. To orient readers to what will be presented, it will be argued that Frey's suggestion (following Grünstäudl[3]) that 2 Peter is literarily dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter* cannot be upheld when one considers the textual and contextual evidence that is being presented in favour of that supposition. Although arguing counter to Frey's own conclusion in regard to this matter, it must be acknowledged that Frey has opened up a fascinating possibility that deserves careful and considered investigation. It is hoped that the tone of this investigation may emulate that reasoned and measured scholarship, which is the hallmark of Jörg Frey's own meticulous research.

With great care Frey seeks a new historical contextualization in which to situate the composition, polemics, and theological response presented in 2 Peter. While he notes various literary connections and dependencies, he states 'there is only one writing of the second century for which we can assume a literary connection with 2 Peter—the *Apocalypse of Peter*.'[4] To advance this position, Frey presents five observations which together provide evidence for the position that there is a case of literary dependency between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and, of equal importance for his case, that this evidence also establishes the temporal priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in regards to 2 Peter. Each of these five arguments will be considered in detail and in turn. Thus the textual parallels will be considered where they are the basis of certain of the five points, or alternatively when a more conceptual argument is being suggested then the logical weight of the inferential hypothesis being advanced will be subjected to close examination. Furthermore, while these points are laid out with great clarity in his Radboud Prestige Lectures the discussion will also draw upon places in his commentary where those points are made in greater depth or with different nuance,[5] as well as referring to the seminal discussion in Wolfgang Grünstäudl's monograph,[6] which Frey praises and acknowledges as the origin of his own position concerning the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, before turning to Frey's five points that he views as being in favour of the literary dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it is helpful first to consider previous discussions of the

From Letter to Spirit: An Attempt to Reach through Varying Voices the Abiding Word (London: Black, 1903), 447.

3 Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

4 P. 15 in the present volume.

5 Frey, *Brief*, 170–173.

6 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, esp. 97–147.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

dating of 2 Peter, then especially to consider the way in which the *Apocalypse of Peter* has been utilised to provide a datum for dating 2 Peter.

2 Scholarly Discussion of the Dating of 2 Peter

If the range of proposed dates for 2 Peter is any guide, then establishing the date of this letter is one of the most vexed dating problems involving any of the writings that were later gathered to form the New Testament. For instance, in regard to Galatians, while there is dispute regarding when to date this letter, the range of options regularly suggested is relative narrow. Typically, those who hold to the so-called southern Galatian hypothesis have tended to date the letter early,[7] those who espouse the northern Galatian hypothesis date it later—but often less than a decade later.[8] There are, however, certain others who hold to the southern Galatian hypothesis, but adopt a later date closer to that typically held by proponents of the northern Galatian hypothesis.[9] There are also other scholars who support a northern Galatian destination for the letter, along with a relatively early date.[10] The date range in question usually involves dates between 48–58 CE. In relation to the gospels the dating range is often wider than is the case with the authentic Pauline epistles, but typically it is restricted to a few decades. The Gospel of Mark is a case in point. Although not a widely adopted position, it has been suggested that Mark was written

7 Co-ordinating the two visits mentioned in Galatians with the first two visits in Acts (Acts 9:26–30; 11:30//12:25) usually is taken to imply an early date and a southern Galatian destination. Therefore, both Bruce and Longenecker suggest a dating prior to the Apostolic Council of Acts 15, with a date of composition around 48 CE. See F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 55; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1990), lxxxviii.

8 Classic articulation of the northern Galatian hypothesis is found in Lightfoot's commentary, J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, 10th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1890), 15–35. However, it should be noted that the case for dating is based more on the chronological order of the Pauline letters, rather than on the location of the Galatian churches, see 36–56.

9 Dunn argues for a south Galatian destination and 'a date as late as the mid-50s.' See James D.G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC (London: Black, 1993), 8.

10 In favour of this position de Boer argues that Barnabas was not present when Paul founded the Galatian churches, so this observation 'supports the "North Galatia" hypothesis.' However, in relation to date he states, 'it is probable that Galatians was written somewhat later than 1 Thessalonians, as Paul's second surviving letter whose authenticity is undisputed. A likely date for the letter to the Galatians is thus 51 CE.' Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2011), 5, 11.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

in the early 40s in response to the Caligula crisis.[11] More representative is the divide between scholars as to whether to date Mark prior to the destruction of Jerusalem,[12] or subsequent to the fall of the city.[13] Leaving aside the rarely supported idea that Mark's gospel reflects the Caligula crisis, the vast majority of New Testament scholars tend to date it somewhere between 65–75 CE. Which is again within the range of a single decade.[14]

In contrast, the range of dates proposed for 2 Peter spans a far greater period of time. For those who assume the letter is a genuine writing of the apostle, the letter is typically dated to the 60s. For instance, Bigg holds that 'the Epistle is really the work of St. Peter, but that a different amanuensis [in comparison with 1 Peter] was used.'[15] Furthermore, following Zahn, he comes to the position that the letter 'was probably sent from Antioch shortly before the time when St. Peter went to Rome (60–63), to Jewish Churches in Palestine.'[16] Bigg mentions, but does not necessarily follow Zahn's assumption that the letter known as 2 Peter was written before the work known as 1 Peter.[17] On the other hand, among those who hold non-Petrine authorship, the date of the epistle can range from shortly after the death of Peter (admittedly, itself an unknown date) until some time in the late second century. Therefore, linking 2 Peter to any specific context or circumstances is problematic and remains highly contested even among recent commentators.

---

11 Crossley suggests that the events of the Caligula crisis that occurred around 40 CE may be in view especially in Mk 13, and may be determinative for the composition of the gospel as a whole. He states that the weight of evidence suggests 'A date for Mark between the mid to late thirties and the mid forties.' James G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity*, JSNTSup 266 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 208.

12 Typical of this view, Adela Collins states, 'Since the "desolating sacrifice" and the destruction of the temple seem to belong to the future from the point of view of the evangelist, the Gospel was probably written before 70 CE.' Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 2007), 14.

13 See John S. Kloppenborg, "*Evocatio Deorum* and the Date of Mark," *JBL* 124 (2005): 419–50.

14 For the date range of 65–75 CE encapsulating the central range of scholarly opinions see Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, BNTC (London: Black, 1991), 8.

15 Charles Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 242.

16 Ibid., 247.

17 However, it does not appear to be the case that Bigg completely rules out the possibility of reversing the order of the two Petrine epistles. For whereas he dates 2 Peter to 60–63 CE, he offers a wider date range for 1 Peter. He states that, 'it seems the most likely supposition that the First Epistle of St. Peter was written between AD 58 and AD 64' (Ibid.) This wider range of dates leaves open the possibility that 1 Peter was written after 2 Peter.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Writing slightly after Bigg, Mayor came to a different position regarding the probable date of 2 Peter. First, he set forth the external evidence of the citation of the letter by early Christian writers, which would in turn demonstrate the existence of the epistle. Mayor's examination of such citations suggested that they do not demonstrate attestation of the letter prior to Clement of Alexandria at the earliest. Mayor next turned to analysing the internal features of the letter to gain clues to the date of composition. His first piece of textual evidence is 2 Pet 3:4 concerning 'the passing away of the first generation of Christians.'[18] From this piece of evidence alone he concludes that the date of the letter cannot be earlier than 90 CE. The second piece of evidence involves the reference to a collection of Pauline writings in 2 Pet 3:16, both referred to as γραφαί, and which have been in circulation for sufficient time to be misinterpreted. Thus he concludes that, '125 AD is about the earliest possible date for 2 Peter'. Then he continues by opening up the possibility of a later date, '[i]f the consideration of these various arguments leads us to postpone the date of 2 P. to the second quarter of the Second Century, it of course compels us to reconsider our interpretation of the resemblances noticed between 2 P. and any writings prior to 150.'[19] That observation leads Mayor to make a detailed comparison between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which will be considered in the following section.

Perceived as a relevant factor in dating 2 Peter, Kelly speaks of a 'luxuriant crop of pseudo-Petrine literature which sprang up around the memory of the Prince of the apostles.'[20] This literary creativity undertaken in the name of Peter is seen as the product of the second century, with both 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* being part of this output of written works. Moreover, Kelly sees the two texts as related, with the *Apocalypse* drawing on the Epistle. Hence he states,

> 2 Peter was studied and used by the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and is probably the earliest of the group (just as it is certainly much the finest in quality), although it may possibly be contemporary with the *Preaching*.[21]

18 Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1907), cxxv.

19 Ibid., cxxvii.

20 J.N.D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, BNTC (London: Black, 1969), 236.

21 Ibid.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

On this basis Kelly comes down in favour of an early second century date, stating that the relevant data concur with a date of 100–110 CE. He also accepts the suggestion of Egypt as a likely place of composition.[22] This is also based on the reception of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*, 'which is probably of Egyptian provenance.'[23]

Bauckham presents wide ranging literary evidence for dating 2 Peter, describing (i) documents known to 2 Peter;[24] (ii) documents roughly contemporary with 2 Peter;[25] and (iii) documents dependent on 2 Peter.[26] Bauckham also argues that the comment in 2 Pet 3:4 concerning the fathers falling asleep provides strong evidence of the date of the epistle. Here, 'the fathers' are understood to be 'the generation of the apostles', and hence would include 'people born no later than c. AD 10'.[27] From this Bauckham states, '[t]hus 3:4 alone enables us to date 2 Peter with considerable probability c. AD 80–90.'[28] The confidence and precision that is derived from this small textual detail is impressive. However, others may not think such a detail will bear the weight Bauckham places upon it. Harrington, presumably following Bauckham, also draws on 2 Pet 3:4 as a reference to 'the passing of the apostles and their generation of Christians' and thus dates the letter to 'the very late first century or early second century CE.'[29]

Davids proposes a very broad range of possible dates for the composition of letter, stating regardless of one's position on authorship it must have been written between AD 64–110. Here the latter date is determined on the basis of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He states, 'we can say that it is absolutely clear that 2 Peter was written before AD 140 and most likely before AD 110 since that is the probable range of dates within which the *Apocalypse of Peter* was written,

22 Ibid., 237.

23 Ibid., 236.

24 The first set of documents are dated between 50–80 CE and include the Pauline letters, Jude, 1 Peter, and a Jewish apocalypse used in 2 Pet 3. Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983), 157.

25 The second set of documents, dated between 80–100 CE are viewed as contemporary compositions. This set includes *The Shepherd of Hermas*, *1 Clement*, and *2 Clement*. The dating of *2 Clement* does not reflect the scholarly consensus. (Ibid.).

26 Documents dependent on 2 Peter are listed as the *Apocalypse of Peter* (c. 110–140 CE), and the *Acts of Peter* (c. 180 CE). (Ibid.).

27 Ibid., 158.

28 Ibid.

29 Daniel J. Harrington, "Jude and 2 Peter," in *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, by Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, SP 15 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 237.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

a work that borrows from 2 Peter.'[30] Two things are striking about this statement. First, given the level of circumspection concerning the date of 2 Peter there is an almost reverse confidence in the date of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Second, it is observable that Bauckham's arguments from his commentary have been accepted wholesale—in terms of the date of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and direction of literary dependence for the two works, and as a concomitant the implications that he draws in regard to the dating of 2 Peter. However, Bauckham's more specific dating of the *Apocalypse* to the Bar Kokhba revolt is not discussed.[31]

Donelson provides little basis for the dating he ascribes to letter, apart from the dating of the Bodmer papyri. Here he repeats the standard dating to the third century, although that datum has been recently questioned. Hence in relation to date he states, '[i]t could have been written any time in the second century. Most commentators think the first half of that century would be more likely than the second half. Sometime between 120 and 150 CE would be a good guess, but it is only a guess.'[32]

Recently, Grünstäudl has argued for the literary dependence of 2 Peter not only upon the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but also on the writings of Justin Martyr. In particular, he argues that 2 Peter is dependent upon Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, with the key parallels being found between Justin, *Dial.* 81.1–3; 82.1–3 and 2 Pet 1:18, 21–2:1; 3:8, 13.[33] The key elements revolve around the shared phrases 'there will be a new heaven and a new earth' (*Dial.* 81.1) and 'we are looking for new heaven and a new earth' (2 Pet 3:13), and Justin's statement that 'the day of the Lord is as a thousand years' (*Dial.* 81.3) and the Petrine comment 'one day with the Lord is as a thousand years' (2 Pet 3:8). Not only are there a few differences in the phraseology, but more significantly these are both memorable and stock phrases. However, based on these parallels, Grünstäudl comes to the following conclusion.

> In Verbund mit der Annahme, 2 Petr sei im alexandrinischen Umfeld des Clemens entstanden, bildet 2 Petr überdies gewissermaßen einen Brüchentext zwischen Justin und Clemens, respektive Rom und Alexandrien, ohne das seine Bekanntschaft mit Justin im

30 Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006), 131.

31 See Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160–258.

32 Lewis R. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude*, NTL (Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2010), 209.

33 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 206–226, esp. 207.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> Alexandrien der zweiten Hälfte des zweiten Jahrhunderts angesichts der Rezeptionsgeschichte von Justins Werken und des Befundes bei Clemens zu überraschen brauchte.[34]

Grünstäudl's dating of 2 Peter to the second half of the second century was also suggested by earlier scholars, although not advanced with such detailed analysis. For instance, Knopf proposed the similar date range of 150–180 CE.[35]

Lastly, in this representative rather than exhaustive survey, Jörg Frey comes to the following position on the date of 2 Peter. He provides no absolute date, but instead situates the dating of the epistle based on literary and conceptual relations.

> Ob 2Petr—wie Grünstäudl vermutet—auch noch Justin kennt und dann frühestens um 160 n. Chr. zu datieren wäre, ist zweifelhaft, doch bleibt eine Zeitspanne um die Mitte des 2. Jh.s (140–160 n. Chr.) als wahrscheinlichster Zeitraum der Entstehung des Schreibens. Die Wahrnehmung sachlicher und sprachlicher Parallelen in Texten der Apostolischen Väter (v. a. Hermas, 2Clem) und die Tatsache, dass eine positive Bezeugung bei den Autoren des späten 2. Jh.s (einschließlich Clemens) noch fehlt, bestätigen dies. Eine wesentlich frühere Ansetzung empfiehlt sich nicht.[36]

In particular, the relationship to the *Apocalypse of Peter* is key to Frey case for dating 2 Peter sometime around the middle of the second century. In the Radboud lectures, Frey states that '2 Peter postdates the *Apocalypse of Peter* and responds to it.'[37] Even more significantly he states that 'Second Peter draws on certain elements of the *Apocalypse*, but it does so from a critical distance.'[38] This 'critical distance' is temporal in nature, and thus is another indicator of a date no earlier than the middle of the second century.

This brief survey has shown that dates in the range 60–180 CE, and in some cases even later, have been suggested as plausible possibilities for the time of composition of the letter. Although only touched upon in this section, the relationship between 2 Peter the *Apocalypse of Peter* has been pivotal in a number

34 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 293.

35 Rudolf Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä*, 7th ed., KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912), 257.

36 Frey, *Brief*, 186–187.

37 P. 21 in the present volume.

38 Ibid.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of the suggestions about the date of the epistle. So now it is helpful to consider in greater detail the role the *Apocalypse of Peter* has played in attempts to secure the date of 2 Peter.

3 The Apocalypse of Peter and the Dating of 2 Peter

The contention of Jörg Frey, both in his commentary and Radboud lectures, that there exists a literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* that assists in dating 2 Peter, is not without precedent. The relationship between these two texts has been discussed in detail in the important set of studies by Richard Bauckham, although he comes to markedly different conclusions to those advanced by Frey. While Bauckham provides a relatively recent and commendably comprehensive discussion of that relationship, the initial investigation of the link between the two texts commenced soon after the discovery of the Akhmîm Greek fragment (P.Cair. 10759) of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was published. Building on those initial observations, implications were drawn in relation to the dating of 2 Peter. It is helpful to trace briefly those discussions in order to ascertain the basis of the arguments currently being advanced, and to understand precisely what is new in the recent proposals suggested by Grünstäudl and Frey.

The *editio princeps* of the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was published in 1892 by U. Bouriant, under the auspices of the *Mission archéologique française au Caire*.[39] For Bouriant the discovery of two Greek fragments of 1 Enoch, in the same codex that housed the fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, was the more important textual find within the contents of the small parchment book. However, when the *editio princeps* was published, far greater attention, especially in English language scholarship, was focused upon the first text contained in the codex, the *Gospel of Peter*.[40] The discussion of both the *Gospel* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* received a more balanced reception in

39 U. Bouriant, "Fragments du texte grec du livre d'Énoch et de quelques écrits attribués à saint Pierre," in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire*, t. IX, fasc. 1 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892), 93–147.

40 For instance, see H.B. Swete, *The Akhmim Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of Saint Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1893).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

French,[41] and in German[42] scholarship. Yet, even in continental scholarship the focus of attention fell more heavily upon the *Gospel of Peter*, rather than on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Notwithstanding this imbalance in English language publications, some important studies appeared which centred on the study of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[43] In fact it was the earliest publication that appeared after the *editio princeps*, which immediately noted the possible parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.

3.1 *M.R. James: Listing Possible Parallels*

The first published treatment that drew attention to the similarities was that of M.R. James in 1892.[44] He listed fifteen passages from 2 Peter that possibly found parallels with twelve passages contained in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. At this stage James adopted a non-committed approach to explaining these similarities. He stated,

> What the bearing of these resemblances may be upon the vexed question of the authenticity of 2 Peter, I will not take it upon myself to determine; only it must be remembered that three explanations of them are possible. Either the author of the *Apocalypse* designedly copied the Epistle (as S. Jude may also have done), or the *Apocalypse* and Epistle are products of one and the same school, or the resemblances do not exist.[45]

It is striking that James does not even entertain as one of his possibilities, at this stage, the option that it may have been 2 Peter that was dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The reason for this is unclear. Maybe it was felt that the New Testament letter *must* be prior to the *Apocalypse of Peter*, or maybe that the developed treatment of the fate of the dead in the *Apocalypse* was seen as

41 A. Lods, "L'Évangile et l'Apocalypse de Pierre avec le texte grec du livre d'Hénoch. Text publiés en facsimilé, par l'héliogravure d'après les photographies du manuscript de Gizéh," in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire*, t. IX, fasc. 3 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1893), 217–31, 322–35. The page numbers are often cited as 217–235. This is fully understandable because page 322 follows page 231 without any intervening or lost material. The change to numbers in the three-hundred range is presumably due to an error in typesetting.

42 Adolf von Harnack, *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*, TU 9.2 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893).

43 See M.R. James' contribution in the joint volume J.A. Robinson and M.R. James, *The Gospel According to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter: Two Lectures on the Newly Recovered Fragments, Together with the Greek Texts* (London: Clay, 1892).

44 Ibid., 52–53.

45 Ibid., 53.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

being a later product. Hence, it is simply not possible to fathom the basis on which James did not consider that option as a viable possibility. Furthermore, when he stated as a third possibility that 'the resemblances do not exist', that was obviously a shorthand for saying that they do not establish a relationship, literary or otherwise, between the two texts.

However, in a publication twenty years later James entertained a slightly fuller range of options, and also was willing to state his own position on the matter. In his commentary on 2 Peter and Jude, after presenting sixteen passages drawn from 2 Peter that might be paralleled in the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* he stated,

> In view of these passages it has been held that the two writings come from the same hand, or one is under an obligation to the other. To me it seems safest to class them together as works composed in the same circle but not necessarily by the same author, and as perhaps containing expansions of teaching which tradition—possibly trustworthy—had handed down as coming from the Apostle.[46]

Thus James considers four possibilities, three of which he rejects. First, he dismisses the supposition that there was common authorship of both writings (see section 3.3, W. Sanday). However, in distinction from his earlier publication where he only entertained the possibility that the *Apocalypse* copied from 2 Peter, in his commentary (while stated in an opaque fashion) he appears to be open to the possibility of either text copying from the other, although he does not support either of these options. The reason for not adopting direct literary dependency is not stated, but presumably it is because the parallels are not found to be extensive or sufficiently strong. Instead he adopts the position that the two writings are, as he described it in his initial publication, 'products of one and the same school', but in his commentary as 'works composed in the same circle'. These statements appear to represent the same position stated in different terms.

3.2 *Adolf von Harnack: the Dependence of 2 Peter on the* Apocalypse of Peter

Writing shortly after James, in 1893 Harnack likewise noted a number of possible parallels between the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter. In total he listed sixteen passages from 2 Peter that might exhibit

46 M.R. James, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*, CGTSC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), xxviii.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

parallels with the *Apocalypse*.[47] At that stage he made the following observation on the kinship between the two writings, but as he stated at this point he chose to leave aside a discussion of the direction and nature of the relationship.

> Dagegen sind, wie gezeigt worden, der 2. Brief und die Apokalypse blutsverwandt (wie die Verwandtschaft zu deuten ist, lasse ich dahingestellt). Schon bevor das Apokalypsenfragment aufgefunden worden ist, habe ich darauf hingedeutet, dass in Alexandrien Clemens die Apokalypse benutzt, aber nicht den 2. Brief, Origenes dagegen diesen benutzt, aber jene nicht. Die Geschichte der beiden, innerlich zusammengehörenden Schriften ist noch genauer zu studieren.[48]

However, it was not until later that he proposed that it was in fact 2 Peter that was dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[49] This position was adopted by several other German scholars,[50] but it did not gain widespread support in English-speaking scholarship.[51]

3.3 *W. Sanday: Two Texts with a Common Author*

In his Bampton lectures of 1893, delivered shortly after the initial publication of the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Sanday presented his understanding of the relationship of that text to 2 Peter in order to comment on the authorship of the epistle. Drawing upon the parallels proposed by James, Sanday states that '[t]he resemblances are so marked as I think to prove that the two writings are nearly connected.'[52] He mentions two possibilities that he rejects: 'that the writer of the *Apocalypse* may have imitated the Epistle or that

47 Harnack, *Bruchstücke*, 87–88.

48 Ibid., 89.

49 Adolf von Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897), 471–72.

50 Adolf Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. Janet Penrose Ward, Translated from the 2nd German edition (1900) (London: Smith, Elder, 1904), 239; H. Weinel, "Die Offenbarung des Petrus," in *Handbuch zu den Neutestamentlichen Apokryphen*, ed. Edgar Hennecke (Tübingen: Mohr, 1904), 212 (although not in the 1924 edition of this work); G. Hollmann, "Der Brief Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus," in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, ed. Johannes Weiss, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907), 573; Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä*, 255.

51 For example, one of the few English-speaking scholars who adopted this viewpoint see J. Moffatt, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1918), 367.

52 W. Sanday, *Inspiration: Eight Lectures on the Early History and Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration Being the Bampton Lectures for 1893* (London: Longmans, Green, 1893), 347.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

both may be affected by some common influence.'[53] Without presenting any textual comparisons or arguments for arriving at his own conclusion, Sanday states his preferred explanation by saying that it is 'on the whole more probable that the writings are both by the same hand.'[54] Despite the lack of argumentation, Sanday's position has been frequently discussed in the subsequent literature, yet it gained few adherents.

3.4 *A.E. Simms: The Dependence of the* Apocalypse of Peter *on 2 Peter*

Writing in *The Expositor* in 1898, Ernest Simms examined the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He framed his discussion by stating that '[t]he discovery of the "Apocalypse" has introduced a new element into the 2 Peter controversy.'[55] Although Simms does not explicitly define the nature of 'controversy' that he mentions in his opening sentence, it appears not primarily to be the dating of the epistle but rather the question of its apostolic authorship. Consequently, in order to support Petrine authorship, an early date is required, rather than a second century date. Simms lays out three possibilities that he sees as arising from points of similarity in language between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. These are that, 'the two works proceed from the same hand, or the writer of the epistle borrowed from the *Apocalypse*, or the author of the *Apocalypse* is indebted to the Epistle.'[56] Simms states that only the final proposal is consonant with Petrine authorship. What is perhaps more interesting is the clear presentation of the three alternative hypotheses that have tended to define much of the discussion.

Simms notes that Clement of Alexandria provides the earliest external attestation for the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and then catalogues what he views as other secure references to the text in early Christian sources. He then proceeds to construct his argument on three fronts. First he rejects M.R. James' contention that a significant number of later Christian writings are indebted to the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In this way he creates an impression of the limited popularity and circulation of the work. Elements that James sees in early Christian works as having been derived from the *Apocalypse of Peter* are instead seen as part of the common stock of images drawn. Hence he states,

53 Ibid.
54 Ibid., 348.
55 A. Ernest Simms, "Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," *The Expositor* 5/8 (1898): 460.
56 Ibid.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> By the time Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Aristophanes, Plato, Vergil, and hosts of others had contributed their descriptions of the other world, there existed among the Greeks and Romans a well-defined stereotyped picture of Elysium and Tartarus. A common stock of materials was to hand whereon all artists might draw. In Elysium there would be brilliant light, flowers, foliage, fragrance and inhabitants to match; in Tartarus, darkness, fire, squalor and mud, stock crimes, stock punishments. These would appear in some shape or other in every such piece of literature, so that in the process of time a writer would not be directly indebted to another for his description.[57]

Having suggested the limited circulation of the text, he then turns to his second argument concerning the textual affinities of 2 Peter.

Here he engages in a count of various verbal features. He notes that there are 153 words in common between 1 Peter and 2 Peter, but only 100 words in common between 1 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. From this enumeration he draws the conclusion that, '[t]his shows somewhat greater relative closeness, *on the score of words*, between 1 Peter and 2 Peter than between 1 Peter and the Fragment [i.e. the *Apocalypse of Peter*].'[58] It is strange, however, that he has not provided a count of the words shared between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In this section of the argument he also notes that of the 57 NT *hapax legomena* [which he calls *hapax eiremena*] contained in 2 Peter, 24 are not found in the classical authors. Whereas for the *Apocalypse of Peter* of the 45 *hapax legomena* only 2 are not found in classical authors. It is also noted for 1 Peter that of the 65 *hapax legomena*, 27 are not found in classical authors.[59] These arguments are intended to highlight the verbal affinities between 1 Peter and 2 Peter, while creating a sense of linguistic distance between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

The final argument concerns the literary parallels adduced by M.R. James between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Simms briefly works through fourteen literary parallels between the two works that were suggested. His opening comment informs readers of his perspective: '[a] microscopic study of any piece of literature will cause us to fancy resemblances where they do not always exist.'[60] His conclusion to this third argument is stronger still, stating that the resemblances between the two texts are not as great as imagined, that

57 Ibid., 462.
58 Ibid., 465.
59 For further details, see ibid.
60 Ibid., 466.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the two works differ radically in tone, style, language and morale, and that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has attempted to appropriate Petrine authority to legitimize his own work.

By contrast, and as part of the overall conclusion, the affinities between 1 Peter and 2 Peter are seen as being sufficiently significant to suggest common authorship. However, in relation to the *Apocalypse of Peter* Simm states,

> The explanation is, that the author of the Epistle wrote when this *Apocalypse* was not yet in existence; he had written no such work nor had had any such vision. Thus the early date of the *Apocalypse* provides an earlier date for Second Peter.[61]

Simms argument appears to be relatively successful on two fronts. First, he shows that some of the imagery in the *Apocalypse of Peter* is common to wider Greco-Roman writings concerning the underworld and post-mortem punishments. Second, he has demonstrated that a number, but not all of James' parallels were extremely slight. However, the value of his discussion of shared words perhaps carries far less weight than Simms ascribed to it. Furthermore, his final statement is perplexing. He makes reference to the 'early date of the *Apocalypse*', but it is hard to see how a date much earlier than Clement of Alexandria's citation of the text has been established on the basis of the evidence that Simms presented. Therefore, even if Simms is correct that the *Apocalypse of Peter* post-dates 2 Peter, the latter text could still be composed in the second century any time prior to the writings of Clement of Alexandria.

3.5 *F. Chase: Two Texts from the Same School*

Another significant discussion of the relationship between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter was conducted by Frederic Chase, in a discussion that is sometimes overlooked perhaps due to its location in a multi-volume reference work.[62] Chase draws largely on the parallels adduced by James and then sets out five possibilities to explain the data. His five options may be quoted in a summarized form:

1. The coincidences may be boldly put aside as chance resemblances without significance.
2. Did the writer of the *Apocalypse* borrow from 2 P?
3. Did the writer of 2 P borrow from the *Apocalypse*?

61 Ibid., 471.

62 F.H. Chase, "Peter, Second Epistle Of," in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900), 796–818, especially 814–816.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

4. Are the two documents the work of one writer?
5. Are the two documents the work of two writers who belonged to the same school, whose thoughts moved in the same directions, and to whom the same expressions and words had grown familiar?[63]

Interestingly, only the first option is not framed as an open question and Chase dismissively puts it aside, commenting '[t]his view hardly needs discussion' and '[i]t can scarcely be held by a serious critic'.[64] The second view is also swiftly rejected since, according to Chase, the shared phrases appear naturally in the *Apocalypse* and do not have the feel of source material, some of the shared phrases are repeated in the *Apocalypse* thus suggesting they were the author's own formulations, and none of the 'strange and remarkable phrases of 2 P'[65] are replicated by the *Apocalypse*. In relation to the third view, Chase comments that it 'appears to be a quite possible one.'[66] The fourth view, the position advanced by Sanday, is discussed at length but rejected primarily on the basis of 'the literary style of the two documents', with the *Apocalypse* adjudged to be 'simple and natural in style'[67] in contrast to 2 Peter. No direct comment is offered in relation to the fifth view. Instead Chase states that '[a]mong the five possible explanations the choice seems to lie between (3) and (5).'[68]

The precise reasons why Chase rejects the theory that 2 Peter was literarily dependent upon the *Apocalypse of Peter*, in favour of the view that both originate from the same 'school' is not entirely clear. He draws attention to a similarity not only in words and definitely marked ideas, but more generically in looser 'general conceptions'. Presumably this similarity of mind-set is seen not as the result of literary borrowing, but arising from writing both texts in the same context where similar ideas were in circulation. It may be asked whether the ideas in 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* are so distinctive that they must have arisen in the same narrow community or 'school', rather than simply reflecting the thought world of the numerically small nascent Christian movement.

3.6 *J.B. Mayor: the Use of 2 Peter by the* Apocalypse of Peter

Writing less than a decade after Simms' discussion, Mayor notes a closer resemblance between 2 Peter and the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* than exists between 2 Peter and the putative parallels to the writings of

63 Ibid., 815–16.
64 Ibid., 815.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., 816.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Josephus, Philo, and a decree of Stratonicea. He regards the latter possibility as 'due in the main to commonplaces of rhetorical study, set prefatory phrases, and the like.'[69] In regard to the potential parallel between the transfiguration scene in the synoptic tradition and the mountain top revelatory scene in the Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, after noting a few points of contact Mayor observes a number of substantive differences. He states,

> The time is apparently after the Resurrection. It is the Twelve and not the Three to whom the vision is manifested. There is no voice from heaven. The two saints are anonymous, so that the passage might seem to be rather a working up of the appearance of the saints mentioned in Mt. 27^{53} than the Transfiguration of the Lord.[70]

However, drawing upon various of the other parallels suggested by James,[71] Mayor considered several of these as reflecting some type of relation between the two writings.[72] He discusses two possible explanations. The first is the theory of Sanday, 'that the two writings are both by the same hand.'[73] In response Mayor catalogues differences in language, content, and tone.[74] Consequently, he rejects Sanday's theory, and in the process rejects the notion that the author of 2 Peter drew upon the *Apocalypse*: '[i]t appears to me therefore very improbable that the author of our Epistle wrote the *Apocalypse*, and I doubt very much whether he was in any way indebted to it.'[75] However, due to some similar phrases and shared ideas, Mayor considered it likely that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was familiar with 2 Peter. This observation is not used to establish the date of 2 Peter, since in Mayor's commentary the probable date of the letter, the second quarter of the second century, had been argued primarily on the basis of internal evidence, rather than on the basis of literary dependencies.

---

69 Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxx.

70 Ibid., cxxxi.

71 Robinson and James, *The Gospel According to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter*, 52.

72 Mayor stated '[t]hese resemblances of subject and language seem too marked to be accidental.' Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxii.

73 Sanday, *Inspiration*, 348.

74 In relation to the description of the underworld in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, he comments, '[i]t seems to me that the whole tone of this has much more resemblance to the puerility of the Erotica Scriptores than it has to the dignified and serious tone of 2 Peter.' Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxxxii.

75 Ibid., cxxxiii–ccxxxiv.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3.7 *F. Spitta: Reinforcing the Case for the Dependence of the* Apocalypse *on 2 Peter*

Writing in 1911, Spitta reinforced Simms' position that it is the *Apocalypse of Peter* that is dependent upon 2 Peter.[76] Spitta considered a number of possible parallels, apparently drawing primarily on those cases mentioned by Harnack. After consideration of these textual comparisons Spitta came to the slightly exasperated and terse conclusion that,

> Wie man bei dieser Sachlage nachweisen will, nicht die Apokalypse sei von dem Brief beeinflußt, sondern umgekehrt der Brief von der Apokalypse, ist mir unfaßlich.... Der Brief ist älter als die Apokalypse. So werden den auch die sonstigen Berührungen beider Schriften miteinander auf Abhängigkeit der Apokalypse von dem Briefe zurückgehen, wo sie nicht in gemeinsam benutzter Literatur oder religiöser Ausdrucksweise ihren Grund haben.[77]

Bauckham, commenting on Spitta's study, adjudges that it 'was out of date as soon as it appeared, because the publication (in 1910) and recognition (in 1911) of the Ethiopic text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* should have put the question of the Ethiopic text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter in a quite new light.'[78] In many ways this criticism is unduly harsh, and perhaps not entirely warranted, especially since after analysing the relationship on the basis of the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* Bauckham comes to basically the same conclusion as Spitta. If Bauckham is correct that the Ethiopic version more closely represents the original text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* than the Akhmîm Greek fragment, then he appears to have grounded the position of Simms and Spitta on a larger textual basis. There may be some examples in the Greek fragment that are due to later redactional activity, but this does not fatally undermine the case argued by Simms and Spitta as Bauckham suggests. What is more obvious is that the discussion of the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, as Buchholz and Bauckham both observe, 'ground virtually to a halt'[79] after the publication of Spitta's article.

---

76 Friedrich Spitta, "Die Petrusapokalypse und der zweite Petrusbrief," *ZNW* 12 (1911): 237–42.

77 Ibid., 241–42.

78 Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 291.

79 Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988), 94–95.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

3.8 *D.D. Buchholz: The Need to Consider the Ethiopic Version*

The published form of Buchholz doctoral dissertation is one of the most important works dealing with the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He provides an important survey of the history of research up to that date,[80] but without specific focus on the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Although he does not provide his own analysis of this issue, in relation to the unpublished dissertation of D.H. Schmidt,[81] where the author found no significant links between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter, Buchholz comments, 'he has ignored some of the basic connections between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.' This suggests that Buchholz considered the parallels to be sufficiently strong to support a relationship between the two texts, but he does not state his own position on the nature of that relationship. However, he offers a *desideratum* that has been noted and taken up by others since he stated it. He comments that,

> A thorough investigation of the relationship of the Ethiopic text to 2 Peter is much to be desired. A few brief remarks on this subject are made by M.R. James, but these are rather offhandedly dismissed by D.H. Schmidt in his study on the Peter Writings. The desired investigation is still awaited.[82]

Since issuing that plea, others have taken up the challenge to study the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse* in relation to possible textual parallels contained in 2 Peter.

3.9 *R. Bauckham: The Dependence of the Ethiopic Version of the* Apocalypse *on 2 Peter*

Richard Bauckham refocused attention on the question of the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* exploring the implications and the evidence for the dating of both texts. Bauckham's contribution has in many ways become the reference point over the last three decades for many commentators writing on 2 Peter when they turn to the question of the date of the epistle. Although initially writing independently of Buchholz, Bauckham likewise notes the necessity of basing an examination of the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* on the Ethiopic version of the latter

80 Ibid., 82–118.

81 D.H. Schmidt, "The Petrine Writings: Their Redactors and Their Relationships" (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1972).

82 Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 96–97.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

text. Thus he states, 'E [the Ethiopic] must be judged substantially a reproduction of the original *Apocalypse of Peter*, while A is a secondary, edited version.'[83] Here Bauckham is, as he acknowledges, largely dependent on the arguments of James[84] and Prümm.[85] Bauckham contends that the Ethiopic version contains the whole of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and that it is substantially identical with the original form of the *Apocalypse*.[86] Alongside this, however, that the Ethiopic is 'a careless translation'[87] and that in regard to details the Ethiopic 'is not always reliable, because … the translation is poor and the text sometimes corrupt.'[88] Notwithstanding this Bauckham relies on the Ethiopic for identification of parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter.

Elsewhere, when Bauckham discusses specific parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter he identifies twenty-six possible items of correspondence. Of these twenty-six parallels fifteen depend on the Ethiopic text, six on the Akhmîm text, and five on the Rainer fragment—with four of the Rainer parallels also being found in the Ethiopic text, thus increasing the parallels with the Ethiopic to nineteen item.[89] Among these twenty-six parallels he finds eight to be 'impressive', of which five are with the Rainer fragment (four of which also occur in the Ethiopic) and the further three are derived uniquely from the Ethiopic. It is striking that none of parallels that Bauckham considers as decisive as derived from the Akhmîm text, which was the basis on which the parallelism with 2 Peter was first proposed. Bauckham articulates his conclusion as follows:

> My own reconstruction of the evidence gives weight to the hitherto unnoticed parallels between R and 2 Peter, as well as between E and 2 Peter, and concludes that the best evidence for a literary relationship is a series of correspondences which occur in close proximity in both works (in E 14 = R and 2 Pet. 1:14–15; and in E 15–17 = A 4–20 and 2 Pet. 1:16–18). These parallels are good evidence for a literary relationship when considered not as isolated points of contact but as a group of parallels. The direction

83 Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4718.

84 M.R. James, "A New Text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*," *JTS* 12 (1910–1911): 36–54, 157, 362–83, 573–83.

85 K. Prümm, "De genuine Apocalypsis Petri textu: Examen testium iam notorum et novi fragmenti Raineriana," *Biblica* 10 (1929): 62–80.

86 Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," 4716.

87 Ibid., 4717.

88 Ibid., 4718.

89 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 294–302.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> of literary dependence is best indicated by the two transfiguration accounts, where dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter is much more plausible than the opposite relationship.[90]

However, many of these 'impressive' parallels especially in the transfiguration account depend on a single word or short snippet of phrasing found in the Ethiopic, a text that Bauckham notes that in its details is 'poor' and 'sometimes corrupt'. These appear to be precisely the types of details where a later scribe might assimilate the wording to a known text-form, and hence these correspondences may not be found in the original form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. This concern is only reinforced by the fact that the Akhmîm text in its account of mountain top epiphany (not a transfiguration story) is significantly divergent and shorter. Here it appears that the Ethiopic version has not only expanded the narrative at this point, but has also aligned it with the transfiguration account by introducing references to Moses and Elijah and a host of details derived from the synoptic tradition.

In terms of fixing the date for 2 Peter, Bauckham achieves this on the basis of his conclusion that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on the epistle. In regards to the former he argues that it 'derives from Palestinian Jewish Christianity during the Bar Kokhba war of 132–135 CE.'[91] Without interacting with the details of his argument, it is fair to say that most scholars who have looked at the textual evidence in the *Apocalypse of Peter* are not convinced that the level of specific reference that Bauckham attributes to details in the text is persuasive. However, for Bauckham, given that he confidently dates the *Apocalypse of Peter* to 132–135 CE this provided the *terminus ad quem* for the epistle. Elsewhere, based on the reference to the fathers falling asleep in 2 Pet 3:4, Bauckham finds strong evidence for the epistle being written some time between 80–90 CE.[92] For Bauckham, this position is shown to be consistent with the fact that 2 Peter was in circulation and being used by the *Apocalypse of Peter* during the Bar Kokhba war.

The influence of Bauckham's work on a number of subsequent commentators can be illustrated through the statement made by Davids in his commentary. Without any explanation or presentation of evidence he simply states, 'we can say that it is absolutely clear that 2 Peter was written before AD 140 and most likely before AD 110 since that is the probable range of dates in which

90 Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," 4723.

91 Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," 160.

92 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the *Apocalypse of Peter* was written, a work that borrows from 2 Peter.'[93] It is striking how the dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter is taken as axiomatic and without need of demonstration. That is even more surprising when one considers the slender evidence-base and the highly contested debates around existence and direction of any proposed literary relationship.

Similarly, Green echoes the same sentiment when he comments on the priority of 2 Peter in relation to the *Apocalypse of Peter* and states that this offers proof of an early dating. He writes, '[t]he most striking attestation of 2 Peter comes from the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Peter* (ca. 132–135) … As Bauckham notes, the use of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter* "is sufficient to rule out a late date for 2 Peter".'[94] Green helpfully cites a couple of possible textual parallels. However, a number of features of his argument are striking. First, the dating of the *Apocalypse of Peter* to ca. 132–135 reveals his acceptance of Bauckham's linking of the text to the Bar Kokhba rebellion. It may be debated whether the case for doing so is compelling. Second, the inference drawn that a late date is ruled out does not follow logically. Even if 2 Peter were indeed a text utilised by the *Apocalypse of Peter* that would only imply a date prior to 132 CE on Bauckham's reckoning. Most who reject a late date do not mean a date after the 130s, but any date in the early second century or late first century. The motivation is often (but not always) to date 2 Peter earlier in the first century, often early enough to allow for Petrine authorship. However, even the Bar Kochba *terminus ad quem* for 2 Peter still leaves open the possibility of a second century date for 2 Peter. A point recognized at least partially by Davids, since he states that the text could be as late as 110 CE.[95]

4 Arguments for the Literary Dependence of 2 Peter on the Apocalypse of Peter

Both in his commentary[96] and in an even more focused form in his Radboud Prestige Lectures,[97] Frey presents the case for the temporal priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter* over 2 Peter, and for the latter's literary dependence on the former. He presents five pieces of textual evidence which he sees as supporting

93 Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 131.
94 Gene L. Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008), 142.
95 Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 131.
96 Frey, *Brief*, 170–173.
97 Pp. 19–22 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

this hypothesis, three of which involve literary parallels and two of which are inferential in nature derived from elements lacking in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. These five arguments will be examined in detail to assess both their individual value and cumulative weight in establishing the case that Frey and Grünstäudl[98] have recently articulated.

4.1 *The Transfiguration Accounts*

Frey suggests that the highly compressed first-person plural account of the transfiguration contained in 2 Peter (2 Pet 1:16–18) is aware of the Matthean version of the transfiguration story, but that it also draws some key elements from the enlarged version of the story contained in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17). Frey first describes Bauckham's hypothesis, that the transfiguration account contained in the Ethiopic version of *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17 combines traditions from 2 Peter, which is independent of Matthew, with elements from the synoptic tradition.[99] He then calls upon his readers to entertain another scenario. Namely the following:

> If 2 Peter is in fact aware of the Synoptic tradition and most probably the Gospel of Matthew, another reconstruction becomes more plausible: 2 Peter differs from Matthew only in those instances where 2 Peter and Apoc. Pet. agree. Thus, the reference to the transfiguration in 2 Peter is better understood as a brief and focused combination of a reference to the Synoptic accounts, with the addition of particular features ("holy mountain," heavenly voice, "honor and glory") from the *Apocalypse of Peter* (E).[100]

These observations are based on Grünstäudl's slightly earlier argument.[101] To assess the degree of similarity between the transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* it is helpful to set out the parallel texts in English translation. As has been noted, the description of the transfiguration in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is far more extensive than that of the transfiguration account in 2 Peter (and for that matter than the parallel account in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*).

98 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, esp. 97–147.
99 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 290–303.
100 P. 19 in the present volume.
101 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 121.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Pet 1.16–18	Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17[a]
For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received **honour and glory** from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased'—and we ourselves heard this **voice borne from heaven** when we were with Him on the **holy mountain**.	And my Lord Jesus Christ our King said to me: Let us go to the **holy mountain**. And his disciples came with him, praying. And behold, (there were) two men. And it was not possible for us to look at their face. For from one of them comes a light which shines more than the sun. And their clothes (are) shining, and it is not possible to tell, and there is nothing that prevails against them them in this world. There is no mouth which (in) its smoothness is able to tell the beauty of their splendor for astonishing is their appearance and wonderful. And the second, large I say, shines more than hail in his appearance. Rose flowers (are) images of the colour of his appearance and his body … And the hair of his head and from his shoulders and on their foreheads (is) a crown of nard woven in a beautiful flower. Like the rainbow in the sky (is) his hair. Thus (is) the loveliness of his face, and adorned with every ornament. And when we saw them suddenly, we were amazed. And I approached (to) God Jesus Christ and said to him 'My Lord, who is (this)?' And he said to me, 'This is Moses and Elijah.' And I said to him, '(Where are) Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the other righteous fathers?' And he showed us a garden, open (and) large, a pleasant tree and full of the fruit of blessing, full of the smell of fragrance. Its smell (was) beautiful. And its smell comes to it, and from in it I saw a marvel: (there was) fruit often. And my Lord and God Jesus Christ said to me, "[And] you have seen the patriarchs, and like this (is) that which is their rest.' And I rejoiced and believed that this (will be) 'the **honour and glory** of those who pursued my righteousness.' And I understood what is written in the book of my Lord Jesus Christ. And I said to him, 'My Lord, do You wish that I make three tabernacles here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah'? And he said to me in wrath, 'Satan wages war against you, and hath veiled your understanding and the manner of life of this world defeats you. Your eyes will be uncovered and your ears opened up, that (there is) one tabernacle, which the hand of man has not made, which my heavenly Father has made for me and for the elect. And we saw (it), rejoicing.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

(*cont.*)

2 Pet 1.16–18	Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17[a]
	And behold, a **voice came suddenly from heaven**, saying, 'This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him!' And a cloud large came over our head and (it was) very white and it lifted up our Lord and Moses and Elijah and I trembled in astonishment. And we watched and this heaven opened and we saw men who were in the flesh and the came and went to meet our Lord and Moses and Elijah and they went into the second heaven. And the word of the scripture was fulfilled, 'This generation seeks him and seeks the face of the God of Jacob.' And there was great fear and amazement in heaven. The angels flocked together that the word of scripture might be fulfilled which said, 'Open the gates, princes.' And then this heaven which had been opened was closed. And we prayed and went down from the mountain praising God who wrote the names of the righteous in the book of life in heaven.

a This translation is taken from Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 232–244.

There is a further element that the texts share, which is not part of the synoptic tradition. They both use the christological title 'Lord Jesus Christ'. Presumably this title is viewed as a common early Christian designation that it is not singled out as a significant point of contact. There is also an obvious similarity in the form of words spoken by the divine voice. In 2 Peter the utterance is 'This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased' (2 Pet 1:17). Whereas in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* the voice declares, 'This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him!' (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17). These sayings need to be placed alongside their synoptic counterparts to properly assess the degree of unique textual affinity between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

> This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased (2 Pet 1:17).
> This is my Son whom I love, and I have been pleased with him. Obey him! (Eth. *Apoc. Pet.* 15–17).
> This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to him! (Matt 17:5)
> This is My beloved Son, listen to him! (Mk. 9:7)
> This is My Son, *My* Chosen One; listen to him! (Lk. 9:35)

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Although the saying in 2 Pet 1:17 does not contain a parallel to the final instruction, the form of wording in Greek is extremely close to Matthew.

> ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός μου οὗτός ἐστιν εἰς ὃν ἐγὼ εὐδόκησα (2 Pet 1:17).
> οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα (Matt 17:5)

The differences being the transposition of the οὗτός ἐστιν which stands as the opening two words in Matthew,[102] and the change of preposition from Matthew's ἐν with dative relative pronoun to the preposition εἰς with the accusative relative pronoun.[103] Despite these minor differences the significant agreement in the Greek wording of 2 Pet 1:17 and Matt 17:5 suggests a literary relationship between these two texts, most plausibly with the more likely direction of dependence being that of the dependence of 2 Peter on the Matthean text. Hence, Frey's observation, against Bauckham, that 2 Peter is not independent of Matthew appears to find support.

Frey's more substantive point concerns the perceived similarities between the transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The weakest of the three points of affinity that he detects is the reference in each account to what he describes as the 'heavenly voice'. In the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* it is stated that 'a voice came suddenly from heaven', whereas in 2 Peter 1:18 the text relates that 'we ourselves heard this voice borne from heaven'. The Matthean preamble to the divinely uttered statement is 'and behold, a voice out of the cloud' (Matt. 17:5). Here the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is closer to the Matthean statement, apart from the agreement with 2 Peter that the voice came from 'heaven', rather than from the 'cloud' as in Matthew. The synoptic tradition is uniform in referring to a voice from the cloud. However, the substitution of what is perhaps the more common idea of a voice from 'heaven', in place of the 'cloud' is a very natural change of lexeme. The agreement of this single word is not strong enough evidence to support the supposition of direct literary dependence. Moreover, it is important to take into account the significant differences

102 There is, however, a textual variant in 2 Pet 1:17 that presents a form of text that agrees with Matthew in having οὗτός ἐστιν coming before ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός. This is the reading found in a range of manuscripts, ℵ A C[1] Ψ 5 33 81 307 436 442 642 1243 1448 1611 1735 1739 1852 2344 2492 Byz latt sy. The text given above, ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός μου οὗτός ἐστιν, is read by 𝔓[72] B sa[ms]. Although fewer manuscripts preserve this reading it is likely to be original both because of the early combined testimony of 𝔓[72] and B and because of the tendency to assimilate texts to the better known form, here as contained in Matt 17:5.

103 Although not as strongly attested some manuscripts of 2 Pet 1:17 read ἐν ᾧ in agreement with Matt 17:5. See Ψ 33 1175 1243 1611 1852.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

between the narratives as they occur in turn in the synoptic tradition, in the version in 2 Peter, and in the expanded story in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. Thus, it appears appropriate to conclude that this agreement in the word 'heaven' does not constitute a sufficiently strong similarity between the two of the texts to propose a case of literary dependence.

The second similarity is that both the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter agree in describing the mountain as 'holy', as opposed to Matthew's description of a 'high' mountain (cf. 'high mountain', Mk 9:2; 'mountain' Lk 9:28). At first consideration this may be seen as a significant agreement, although admittedly it involves a single word. However, a third version of the transfiguration story contained in the *Acts of Peter* also refers to the 'holy mountain', and also uses the word 'majesty' to describe 'our Lord'. Thus while the text of the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* appears to have some affinities with 2 Peter this is unlikely to be due to literary dependence, but rather may reflect the natural substitution of the more common referent heaven for the origin of the heavenly voice in place of 'the cloud'. Since this substitution is also made in the *Acts of Peter*, as cited below, it is plausible that this is not a case of literary dependence but reflects a more widely circulating change to the transfiguration story as it was retold in later Christian literary accounts.

> Our Lord, willing that I should behold his majesty in the holy mountain —I, when I with the sons of Zebedee saw the brightness of his light, fell as one dead and shut mine eyes, and heard such a voice from him as I am not able to describe, and thought myself to be blinded by his brightness. And when I recovered (breathed again) a little I said within myself: Peradventure my Lord hath brought me hither that he might blind me. And I said: If this also be thy will, Lord, I resist not.
>
> ACTS OF PETER 20[104]

It is also helpful to consider arguments against the shared term 'majesty' in 2 Peter and the *Acts of Peter* as constituting strong evidence against these two texts being literarily dependent. As has been observed elsewhere in relation to Grünstäudl's arguments:

> It may be observed that both accounts use the keyword 'majesty', μεγαλειότητος (2 Pet. 1.16) and maiestas (*Acts Pet.* 20). Thus Grünstäudl states, 'Einen „Einfluß von 2 Petr" auf ActPetr 20 könnte vor allem die

104 M.R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, corrected edition (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 321.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

> Spezifizierung des Verklärungsberges als „heilig" (vgl. 2 Petr 1,18) und das Stichwort „maiestas" nahe legen.'[105] He goes to some length to demonstrate the different manner in which the term is used in the two accounts, thereby arguing that one need not assume literary dependency on the basis of this shared terminology. His argument is convincing. However, it may be a simpler argument to observe that the term 'majesty' is already found in the Lukan account of the transfiguration. The Lukan account states, 'all were astonished at the majesty of God', ἐξεπλήσσοντο δὲ πάντες ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι τοῦ θεοῦ (Lk. 9.43a). Therefore the Lukan account of the transfiguration is more likely to be the source of the appearance of the term 'majesty' in both the *Acts of Peter* and 2 Peter, than suggestions of a direct relationship between the two writings.[106]

Therefore the term 'holy mountain' is a very natural substitution for 'high mountain'. The phrase 'holy mountain' is frequent in two of the most commonly cited books of the Septuagint in early Christian literature—Psalms and Isaiah (Ps 2:6; 3:4; 48:1; Isa 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11; 65:25; 66:20; as well as other LXX texts). By contrast, the expression 'high mountain', although not unevidenced in the LXX is less frequent (Isa 40:9; Ezek 17:23; 20:40; 40:2; note also the phrase 'high and lofty mountain'). This second snippet of common phraseology, which Frey construes as evidence of literary dependence, is again more likely to reflect typical early Christian language than to reveal a case of literary dependence.

The third example is perhaps the most significant of the three points listed by Frey, since it involves a three-word phrase 'honour and glory' inserted by both authors of 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* in their respective retellings of the transfiguration account. Again this phrase is not without precedent in the New Testament in this precise order (1 Tim 1:17), or with reverse order 'glory and honour' (Rom 2:7, 10; Heb 2:7, 9; Rev 21:26). Bauckham suggests that the significance is not simply the correspondence of the phrase, but its occurrence alongside other points of similarity. He states, 'τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν is a natural combination, and this point of resemblance between the two works is again significant only in the context of others.'[107] The cumulative weight of the similarities is indeed an important factor to take into consideration. However,

105 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 155.

106 Paul Foster, "The Relationship between 2 Peter and Early Christian Pseudepigrapha," in *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, ed. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, WUNT 389 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 179–201.

107 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 301.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

none of the three cases proposed by Frey is decisive, and hence in combination it is unlikely that these points have a combined force beyond that of their individual weight. Moreover, one must account for the vast differences between the two transfiguration accounts in 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. Length, tone, style, and intention are all vastly different. It is not impossible that one or other drew just three tiny parallels, but omitted the bulk of the account from the alleged source text. However, while not impossible, this is not the most likely scenario when both accounts individually show greater similarity with the synoptic tradition than they do with each other.

Another issue that is not considered in the majority of discussions concerning the possible literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* is which form of the text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* represents the earliest state of that text. Bauckham perhaps states the consensus, although the opinion is rarely reconsidered that 'the Ethiopic text represents the order and content of the original *Apocalypse of Peter* much more faithfully than the Akhmim fragment.'[108] Rather than preferring the uniform priority of one form over the other, it appears that at various points either the Greek or Ethiopic texts have the better claim to originality. Specifically, in relation to the parallel between the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* 15–17 and the Greek *Apocalypse of Peter* 4–11, in the latter the identification with the transfiguration scene is less apparent. In fact, it is questionable whether the account in the Greek text is intended as a recasting of the transfiguration narrative. It may be the case that a totally different scene is intended, but the standard epiphanic features of shining apparel resulted in a later editor casting the more primitive story in the Greek text of *Apocalypse of Peter* in a more developed form as contained in the Ethiopic version with clear indebtedness to the transfiguration account. For, unlike the Ethiopic version, there is no identification of Elijah and Moses, Peter does not express a desire to construct tabernacles, nor is there any voice from heaven that reveals the identity of Jesus. However, the luminous nature of the two unnamed heavenly messengers in the text of the fragment of the Greek *Apocalypse of Peter* may have caused later readers or copyists to make links with the transfiguration story, although such luminous or transformed appearances are not unique to the account of the transfiguration.[109] In this case, the longer form of the Ethiopic text with its explicit reference to the transfiguration account, appears to be a secondary expansion of the more primitive form of the text in the Greek fragment. Since the three features mentioned by Frey,

108 Ibid., 291–92.

109 Paul Foster, "Polymorphic Christology: Its Origins and Development in Early Christianity," *JTS* 58 (2007): 66–99.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the 'holy' mountain, the reference to 'honour and glory', and the voice coming from 'heaven', are all unique to the Ethiopic version, it is not possible to claim that these elements were part of the original form of *Apocalypse of Peter*. Consequently, it is possible that these elements were all later expansions of a more primitive Greek textual form, and therefore they are of little value for determining a literary relationship between 2 Peter and the original form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[110]

4.2 *Prediction of the Death of Peter*

The second parallel that Frey finds to be of significance for establishing the literary dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter* is the perceived similarity in the predictions of Peter's martyrdom contained in 2 Pet 1:13–14 and in Ethiopic *Apoc. Pet.* 14. Once again the tradition concerning the impending death of Peter is not present in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, the tradition is present in a small fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* known as the Rainer fragment, or as P.Vindob.G 39756, to give it its catalogue number. Therefore, the case for this tradition being part of the original text of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has a higher degree of probability than was the case with the expanded transfiguration account contained in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*.

In the Ethiopic version the text presents the prediction of Peter's death in the following manner:

> I have told you, Peter, and I have informed you. Go out, therefore, and go to the city which is (in) the west and drink the wine about which I have told you, from the hand of my son who is without sin, that the work of destruction might begin.
>
> ETHIOPIC *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3–4

The form of the text contained in the Greek Rainer fragment is obviously closely related, but not identical. This provides some insight into the ongoing fluidity in the textual tradition surrounding the text of the *Apocalypse*

110 Bauckham postulates a lengthy and complex transmission period and translation process before the Ethiopic version of the text came into existence. He states, '[t]he Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was probably made from the Arabic (though no Arabic version is now known to be extant), which in turn would have been translated from the original Greek.' This leaves open the opportunity for several stages of redaction in the Ethiopic text. Furthermore, in relation to the two extant Ethiopic manuscripts, it is noted that 'the text in both manuscripts is frequently corrupt.' See Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," 254.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of Peter, between the time of the scribal production of the Rainer fragment and the stage reflected in the later extant Ethiopic manuscripts. The Rainer fragment, which presumably reveals an earlier stage of transmission than the Ethiopic, reads:

> Look, Peter, I have manifested to you and expounded all of this. And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup which I have promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that his destruction may have a beginning.
>
> P.VINDOB.G 39756; f.2 recto line 8–f.2 verso line 11[111]

Here is is assumed that the Rainer fragment offers the best text for comparison with the putative parallel in 2 Pet 1:13–14, since it is both early and is likely closer in wording to the original Greek text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

The parallel between the earliest recoverable form of the prediction of Peter's death in the *Apocalypse of Peter* and a martyrdom prediction in 2 Peter can be set out to highlight the similarities and differences between the two texts.

P.Vindob.G 39756; f.2 recto line 8–f.2 verso line 11	**2 Pet 1:13–14**
ἰδού ἐδήλωσά σοι Πέτρε καὶ ἐξεθέμην πάντα. καὶ πορεύου εἰς πόλιν ἀρχούσαν δύσεως, καὶ πίε τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐπηγγειλάμην σοι ἐν χειρεὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἅιδου, εἵνα ἀρχὴν λάβῃ αὐτοῦ ἡ ἀφάνια. Look, Peter, I have manifested to you and expounded all of this. And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup which I have promised you at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades, so that his destruction may have a beginning.	δίκαιον δὲ ἡγοῦμαι, ἐφ᾽ ὅσον εἰμὶ ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σκηνώματι, διεγείρειν ὑμᾶς ἐν ὑπομνήσει εἰδὼς ὅτι ταχινή ἐστιν ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματός μου, καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐδήλωσέν μοι. And I consider it right, as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

111 This translation is taken from Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), 128.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The two most striking similarities are the shared use of the verb δηλόω although in slightly different forms (ἐδήλωσά//ἐδήλωσέν), and the use of first person narratives—although in the *Apocalypse of Peter* it is Jesus speaking, whereas in 2 Peter it is Peter describing his impending fate. The differences are, however, more striking. The metaphor for death in the Rainer fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is to 'drink the cup' (in the Ethiopic 'drink the wine'), whereas in 2 Peter the image is that of 'the putting off my tent' (or 'the laying aside of my dwelling'). The *Apocalypse of Peter* also located the place of death as the city that is in or rules over the west, which is obviously a fairly transparent cipher for Rome. The fact that Rome is identified as only 'ruling over the west' may reflect a text that is aware of the split between imperial capitals in the east and west, with Constantine moving the seat of the Empire to Byzantium around 330 CE. In the Rainer fragment there is an explicit reference to Peter, and he is promised that his fate will be at the hand of the son of the one who is in Hades (presumably Nero), and that this will lead to the beginning of the 'destruction'. All these elements are absent in 2 Pet 1.13–14. Instead, in 2 Peter the rhetorical function of the announcement of Peter's impending death is entirely different. Rather than serving as a warning of the impending destruction, it functions as a hortatory encouragement to believers to remember the truth of the faith, especially as communicated in the letter itself, after the death of Peter.[112]

Despite Frey's contention that the passage in the Rainer fragment 'provides the closest parallel to the remark in 2 Pet 1:14 about Jesus revealing Peter's impending death',[113] it is difficult to locate substantive agreement between the two traditions. Frey may be correct in relation to determining an antecedent or source for 2 Pet 1:14, that 'the only prophecy of Peter's martyrdom in the New Testament provides no adequate explanation (John 21:18–19), since it only foretells that Peter will be an old man when he dies.'[114] However, it does not follow as a default that if Jn 21:18–19 is not a basis for 2 Pet 1:14, then the tradition in 2 Peter must derive from *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3–4. Given the vast differences 2 Pet 1:13–14 and *Apoc. Pet.* 14.3–4, it appears far more likely that both attempt in extremely different ways to account for the sense of loss and maybe even crisis in believing communities after the death of Peter, and part of the coping strategy

112 Most commentators understand the injunction to remember 'these things' as directing readers to the contents of the letter. Slightly more specifically, Green suggests that 'these things' refers 'to the opening discussion in the body of the letter (vv. 3–11), including the grace God has shown them as Benefactor as recounted in verses 3–4 and the Christian virtues outlined in verses 5–7. Green, *Jude and 2 Peter*, 214.

113 P. 20 in the present volume.

114 P. 19 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

adopted in John's gospel, in 2 Peter, and in the *Apocalypse of Peter* is the trope frequently known in testamentary literary that the protagonist knows of the impending death before it occurs. Hence, in this example it is not possible to determine a secure or even likely evidential basis for postulating a literary relationship between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Pet.

4.3 *The Eschatological Conflagration*

An account of the final fiery destruction of the world is depicted in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* 4–6. In 2 Peter there is also reference to a fiery end of the created order (2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12). The relevant texts from the epistle present the following account of a fiery final destruction.

> But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men..... But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up.... waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire!
>
> 2 PET. 3:7, 10, 12

The discussion of the 'last days when the day of God comes' (Ethiopic *Apoc. Pet.* 4) spans three lengthy sections of the text. These will not be replicated here in full, but the most relevant parallels will be excerpted and presented alongside the relevant verbal parallels from 2 Peter. This material is not present in the Akhmîm Greek fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, nor in the Bodleian or Rainer Greek fragments. Therefore, any apparent parallels are derived solely from the Ethiopic text.

The material in *Apoc. Pet.* 4 is certainly integral to the larger section dealing with the coming day of God. It provides the textual and theological basis for asserting that nothing is impossible for God, and hence God will raise up all people for judgment. The chief parallel with 2 Peter is thematic, namely that the heavens and the earth—along with 'ungodly men'—are being stored up for judgment (2 Pet 3:7). Here there is a well-known and widespread idea that punishment and justice will be dispensed by God on a final day of judgment. The verbal parallels are slight and far too generic to permit any case to be mounted for direct literary dependence between the two texts at this point. The verbal parallels may increase slightly in strength between 2 Peter and *Apoc. Pet.* 5–6. Both texts speak of fire at the final assize. This is done in a

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

truncated manner in 2 Peter, with the cosmos being preserved 'for fire' (2 Pet 3:7). By contrast in the *Apocalypse of Peter* the references to fiery destruction are recurrent and much more fulsome. As the agent of destruction 'cataracts of fire will be opened up', water will be transformed 'into coals of fire and everything which is in it will burn up and even the ocean will become fire.' In addition to terrestrial fire, the cosmos will be incinerated: 'from under heaven a bitter fire which does not go out … will flow for the judgment of wrath.' In addition, the celestial bodies will be consumed with fire (*Apoc. Pet.* 5). The description continues throughout *Apoc. Pet.* 5–6 with recurrent descriptions of the fire of judgment. It is helpful to consider Buchholz's explanation of the textual relations to *Apoc. Pet.* 5. He states,

> The conflagration of the universe in this chapter is based in large part on Isaiah 13:6–13. 2 Pt 3:5–7, 10–13 is the only place in the New Testament where the dissolution of the world by fire is expressed (cf. Rev. 20:9). But in 2 Peter the first creation was through water in order to have it ready, it seems, to be destroyed with fire.[115]

There are shared ideas concerning the final destruction of the cosmos by fire in both 2 Peter and Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*. However, the scale of the literary description found in the latter is simply not matched nor paralleled in 2 Peter. Consequently, it appears that both texts inhabit the same thought world—perhaps not unique to Jewish or early Christian texts—but beyond this there is little evidence of direct literary borrowing.

There is perhaps one phrase that is interesting where the language may be closer and go beyond that of the generalities that have already been noted between the two texts. This concerns the statement that 'the elements will melt with fire', καὶ στοιχεῖα καυσούμενα τήκεται (2 Pet 3:12; cf. 'and the elements will be destroyed with fire' 2 Pet 3:10). The *Apocalypse of Peter* likewise speaks of the liquefaction of solids in cosmic conflagration. In relation to celestial bodies, which the text appears to assume are in a solid state,[116] the text states, 'the stars will melt in flame of fire like they had not been created' (*Apoc. Pet.* 5.4). Furthermore, the text portrays an even more extensive 'melting' when it describes the outcome of the unleashing of this all consuming fire, 'then the

115 Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened*, 298.

116 Obviously, since stars exist in a gaseous state the application of higher levels of heat or fire would not result in liquefying that state of matter. Only a cooling (or change of pressure) would result in the gaseous state condensing to a liquid. Therefore, it appears that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* assumes that stars are solid objects.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

whole creation has been melted' (*Apoc. Pet.* 5.6). The image of the dissolving of the heavens and the earth described in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* may find closer parallel in 2 Clement, where the author describes 'the day of judgment coming as a blazing furnace' and describes the consequences as being:

> καὶ τακήσονταί τινες τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ ὡς μόλιβος ἐπὶ πυρὶ τηκόμενος
>
> some of the heavens will be dissolved, and the whole earth will be like lead melting in a fire.
>
> 2 CLEM 16.3

Here the verb τήκω is used twice to describe the process of the changing from the solid to the liquid state, that is liquefaction of a solid, dissolving, or melting. This is the verb that is used in 2 Pet. 3:12 to describe elements being melted with fire, and it may be the same Greek verb behind the description of the stars and the entire cosmos melting in *Apoc. Pet.* 5.4, 6. However, in relation to the description in 2 Clement, Tuckett notes the wide range of parallels, including 2 Pet 3:7, 10.

> The image of the end of the present world order in the form of cosmic conflagration is widespread. In early Christianity, the idea occurs only in the NT at 2 Pet. 3.7, 10. The motif also occurs in Jewish texts such as 1 QH 3.29–36, *Syb. Or.* 3.84–7; 4.172–80, as well as being reflected in some Gnostic circles, and also in Greek philosophical thought, especially the Stoics. Here the apocalyptic speculation is, however, firmly linked to the paraenetic exhortation by linking the speculation about the end-time fire with the theme of judgment: the great conflagration at the End will have as a result the making visible the 'secret and open' deeds of men and women.[117]

Hence, once again there is a similarity of ideas between 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter*, but there is little close verbal agreement of the type that would lead to the conclusion of literary dependence. Moreover, the expansive descriptions of the fiery final conflagration in the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* actually suggests that the author of 2 Peter has not drawn on this extensive narrative by selecting a couple of fairly bland details such as the 'melting' of the elements. Instead, it is far more plausible to see 2 Peter drawing on a well-known

117 Christopher M. Tuckett, *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, OAF (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 271–72.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

and widespread idea that was current in many texts, and that rather than being indebted to any particular source it has simply drawn from the large repository of ideas concerning end-time destruction by fire. From whence the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* derived its own more extensive descriptions is less certain. The detailed narrative could possibly be due to the authorial creativity of the author, alternatively it may reflect the development of precursor texts or draw upon oral or written traditions to which there is no longer access. However, given that the proposed parallels concerning the cosmic conflagration in both 2 Peter and the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* are primarily thematic rather than verbal, and that such images and themes are widespread and commonplace, there is no basis for proposing literary dependence on the basis of this example between these two text in either direction.

4.4 *Lack of Concern Over Parousia Delay in the* Apocalypse of Peter

In contrast with 2 Peter, Frey notes that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is lacking any concern in relation to the delay of the return of Christ. Although he does not identify in his Radboud Prestige Lectures where that concern may be present in 2 Peter,[118] he does so explicitly in his commentary on the epistle. This concern over the delay in the return of the Lord is voiced, according to the author of 2 Peter, by those labelled as mockers in 2 Pet 3:3. Presumably they are to be identified with the 'false prophets' and 'false teachers' of 2 Pet 2:1. The words that are attributed to these people involve a scepticism about the non-appearance of Christ: 'Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation' (2 Pet 3:4). In regard to this statement Frey comments, 'Das Zitat formuliert in einer skeptischen rhetorischen Frage den Zweifel am Eintreten der verheißenen Parusie bzw. Ankunft.'[119]

From the identification both of this concern over the delay of the parousia in 2 Peter and the absence of this same concern in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Frey advances the following argument concerning the relative order of the documents.

> A further striking argument is based on the fact that the problem of the eschatological delay is nowhere reflected in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It would be hard to understand why the *Apocalypse of Peter* would adopt the eschatological scenario from 2 Peter without any trace of its intense discussion about the delay of the parousia.[120]

118 P. 21 in the present volume.
119 Frey, *Brief*, 318.
120 P. 21 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

In contradistinction to what Frey has stated, it would not only theoretically appear natural for a later text to omit concern over parousia delay after the immediacy of its imminence had passed, but moreover, that tendency is discernible among several early Christian writers. Most notably in the Pauline writings the dampening down of eschatological expectations and a tendency to develop a more realized eschatology reflect this.[121] Furthermore, among some of the Apostolic Fathers while there is still a commitment to belief in the future judgment there is little concern about the timing of the parousia.[122] Therefore, contrary to Frey, the lack of reference to parousia delay is precisely the type of theological tendency that one would be most likely to detect in a later text. Moreover, even if the *Apocalypse of Peter* were dependent on 2 Peter, then the omission of the reference to a concern over the delay of the coming of Christ is exactly the type of redactional activity that would be expected in a later text and it would be reflective of the fact that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* was writing at a later stage than the author of 2 Peter.

4.5 *Omission of Material From Jude in the* Apocalypse of Peter

The literary relationship between Jude and 2 Peter has been long recognized. While among older scholarship the view that Jude was dependent on 2 Peter was not uncommon,[123] that view has largely been abandoned in more recent

121 Although perhaps over-schematized, in many ways this is a key finding by R.H. Charles is his study of Pauline eschatology. R.H. Charles, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life: In Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, or, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology from Pre-Prophetic Times till the Close of the New Testament Canon, Being the First Jowett Lectures Delivered in 1898–99*, 2nd ed. (London: Black, 1913). See especially chapter eleven 'The Pauline Eschatology in its Four Stages', 437–475.

122 At the risk of over-generalization, in the Apostolic Fathers concern about the parousia appears to be diminished in comparison with the early Pauline writings in particular. There are references to a future coming judgment. However, perhaps with the exception of *Didache* 16, these tend to be stereotypical and part of larger eschatological frameworks. For instance, in Polycarp's *Letter to the Philippians*, Jesus is affirmed to be the one 'who is coming as judge of the living and the dead' (*Phil.* 2.1), but this statement is made as a behavioural imperative, rather than due to a sense of immediacy of the parousia. Furthermore, in reference to the *Didache*, perhaps the earliest of those texts grouped under the artificial label 'Apostolic Fathers', Jefford writes, 'the urgency of apocalyptic as a meaningful call to the immediate return of the Lord upon the clouds seems sharply diminished.' Clayton N. Jefford, *The Apostolic Fathers and the New Testament* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2006), 79.

123 Representative of this view, Bigg holds 'that 2 Peter is older than Jude' (p. 242), and this is based upon a detailed analysis of how parallel material has been redacted by the author of Jude. See Bigg, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 216–24. Also for a detailed statement of this position see Friedrich Spitta, *Der zweite Brief des Petrus und der Brief des Judas: eine geschichtliche Untersuchung* (Halle a. S.: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1885), 381–470.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

discussions. It is, therefore, accurate to speak of a nearly unanimous consensus among contemporary scholars in support of the view that 2 Peter is literarily dependent on Jude.[124] Not only are the literary parallels evident, but an analysis of redactional tendencies supports the hypothesis that 2 Peter has modified and edited the text of Jude, rather than the opposite hypothesis that Jude is the later text and the author redacts 2 Peter.

Given that consensus, which Frey has skilfully argued in his own commentary on the two epistles, he builds upon the argument of Grünstäudl,[125] that if the *Apocalypse of Peter* had drawn on 2 Peter then one would expect to find in the *Apocalypse of Peter* material that paralleled the traditions drawn from Jude which had been incorporated from 2 Peter. Instead, since there are no instances of parallels in the *Apocalypse of Peter* to those traditions from Jude that were used by 2 Peter, then the corollary follows. Namely, that it is 2 Peter that draws on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and moreover that the author of 2 Peter combines traditions from the *Apocalypse of Peter* with material from Jude. Frey expresses this observation in the following manner.

> While 2 Peter draws heavily on Jude, there are absolutely no common element between Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Is it realistic to think that the Apocalypse may have used 2 Peter but omitted all the elements from Jude? More plausible is the assumption that the *Apocalypse of Peter* did not know Jude, whereas the author of 2 Peter has adopted elements from Jude and from the *Apocalypse of Peter* and interpreted both of them to serve his own aims.[126]

There are, however, two logical fallacies in this argument, even if one accepts that there are sufficient literary parallels to demonstrate the use of 2 Peter by the *Apocalypse of Peter*. First, there is no account taken of the sample size. That is, given the limited number of plausible parallel traditions between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it is unsurprising that the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* has not adopted any of the material that finds its origin in Jude. For instance, if the parallel involving the transfiguration accounts were to be considered as evidence of the literary dependence of the *Apocalypse* on 2 Peter, then the borrowing of unique elements comprises two single words: 'holy' in

124 See Mayor, *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, i–xxv; Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 141–43; Jerome H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 37C (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 120–22; Frey, *Brief*, 154–62.

125 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, esp. 137–141.

126 P. 21 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

relation to the mountain, 'heaven' as a description of the origin of the voice, and the three-word phrase 'honour and glory'. The author of the *Apocalypse* would have selected this material because the mountain-top revelatory scene would have been particularly apposite to the opening scene of revelatory disclosure in his own text.

This then leads on to the second logically fallacy. The author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* is not engaged in some type of random sampling exercise from 2 Peter, whereby one could infer that if the author of 2 Peter derived ten percent of the material in his epistle from Jude, and the author of the *Apocalypse* derived ten percent of the material in that writing from 2 Peter one would expect on average one percent of the material in the *Apocalypse* to be derived from Jude. Rather, we are dealing with authors who are making intentional rather than random selections from traditions at their disposal. Hence such inferences based on what might be expected in a pattern of random sampling are of little value in explaining the literary borrowing that occurs, especially when such small amounts of parallel material are being borrowed. In the end this appears to be the most fallacious of the arguments inferred in support of the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It is also dependent on first establishing that a literary relationship does in fact exist between the two texts. As has been shown above, while that is not totally impossible, the evidential base for supporting that theory is extremely slender. Therefore, if the *Apocalypse of Peter* is literarily dependent on 2 Peter, then given the relatively slight amount of textual borrowing and the intentionality in the choice of material selected for re-use by the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the lack of any traditions in the *Apocalypse of Peter* that reflect material in common with the Epistle of Jude is neither surprising nor significant.

5 Conclusions

One of the features of Jörg Frey's recent commentary that marks it out from other recent commentaries treating 2 Peter is the comparatively late date he assigns to the composition of the epistle. He suggests that the letter is to be dated to the period 140–160 CE.[127] There is no strong reason to consider this as necessarily incorrect—the earliest manuscripts of the epistle date from significantly after that period and patristic citations of the letter only emerge in the third century. This discussion, however, has focused on what Frey views as the major piece of evidence in support of that date range, as opposed to earlier

127 Frey, *Brief*, 186–187.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

possible dates of composition. That argument is based on the assessment that 2 Peter can be shown to be dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Frey offers five pieces of evidence in support of this argument, three elements are based on textual parallels and two are inferential.[128] It is notable that the arguments are based primarily on the Ethiopic text. This reflects the fact that the arguments of James and Prümm (most recently promoted by Bauckham) that the Ethiopic version best preserves the origin form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, have been taken as convincing.

The first textual argument involved the transfiguration scene as depicted in the Ethiopic version of the *Apocalypse* and also as contained in the short reference to the transfiguration in 2 Peter 1:16–18. The three significant points of contact presented were first the shared description of the mountain as 'holy', rather than 'high' in the synoptic tradition; secondly, the observation that the voice comes from 'heaven' rather than a 'cloud' again as in the synoptic tradition; and thirdly, the shared phrase 'honour and glory'. These points of contact are slight and brief. Moreover, given the dissimilarities between the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Pet 1.16–18 they are not sufficient to establish a strong argument for literary dependence. Significantly, these verbal points of contact do not occur in the Akhmîm Greek fragment, which itself presents a mountain top encounter rather than a transfiguration account. This further weakens the case for literary dependence at this point, since it may be the case that a later redactor expanded this basic narrative of a mountain top epiphany by incorporating elements from the synoptic transfiguration account.

The second and third arguments relate to shared traditions about the death of Peter and the eschatological conflagration. These two putative parallels are both textual in nature, but again the lack of extended verbatim agreement and the general nature of the topics discussed (that were topics of wider interest in early Christianity) militate against a persuasive case for direct literary dependence between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter on the basis of these verbal affinities. In particular, the widespread interest in the figure of Peter both in New Testament and non-canonical texts in early Christianity is well attested.[129] Therefore, the shared interest in the themes of eschatological destruction and the death of Peter do not offer evidence for a secure, or even likely case of literary dependence.

128 Pp. 19–22 in the present volume.

129 For references to Peter in non-canonical texts see Paul Foster, "Peter in Noncanonical Traditions," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 222–62.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

The final two arguments suggested by Frey are of a different character in comparison with the three proposed potential literary parallels. The first concerns the lack of concern over parousia delay in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Contrary to Frey's suggestion that this suggests that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is earlier than 2 Peter, it has often been seen as axiomatic in relation to early Christian writings that there was a waning in eschatological concerns with the progress of time, and that parousia expectation and delay became less of a central concern. However, one must resist an overly linear view of such trajectories since concerns about the delay of the parousia are perhaps more dependent on group dynamics and external pressures, than simply on the passage of time. As Frey has noted,

> Thus we find a short-term-expectation even in the second century and later, and such an expectation is often confined to particular groups or the result of a particular situation or experience. Short-term-expectations and the experience of the delay coexisted for a longer time, and the early Christian expectation only disappeared in a longer process that came to a closure not before the time of Constantine.[130]

Notwithstanding these correct observations about the non-linearity of theological developments and the specificity of concerns such as parousia delay, the fact that 2 Peter expresses concern about the passing of the apostolic generation and the delay of the parousia while the *Apocalypse of Peter* does not, of itself reveals nothing about the relative order of texts. In fact, the absence of such features from the *Apocalypse of Peter* is more likely to be suggestive (although far from conclusive) of it being the later text.

The final argument concerning the absence of traditions found in Jude from the *Apocalypse of Peter* was seen to be logically fallacious. On the basis of the case that the *Apocalypse of Peter* borrowed from 2 Peter, given that the choice of material was not a random sample and that the level of borrowing involved a small sample of material, the absence of traditions from Jude establishes very little indeed.

In the end, while not persuaded by Frey's case for the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, this in no way implies a rejection of his larger undertaking in producing a magisterial commentary on the epistles of Jude and 2 Peter. That careful and scholarly work is further exemplified in his series of

130 Jörg Frey, "Eschatology in the New Testament—an Introduction: Classical Issues, Disputed Themes, and Current Perspectives," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 26.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Radboud Prestige lectures, which reflect his meticulous mind and careful handling of sources. It is hoped that this interaction with one small aspect of his work will not only be a contribution to the wider discussion, but more importantly will also mean that others focus more closely on the monumental work of the eminent scholar Jörg Frey, in whose debt we all stand.

Bibliography

Abbott, Edwin A. "Appendix V: The Second Epistle of St. Peter Contrasted with the Gospel of John." In *From Letter to Spirit: An Attempt to Reach through Varying Voices the Abiding Word*, 443–67. London: Black, 1903.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50.

Bigg, Charles. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*. ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901.

Boer, Martinus C. de. *Galatians: A Commentary*. NTL. Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2011.

Bouriant, U. "Fragments du texte grec du livre d'Énoch et de quelques écrits attribués à saint Pierre." In *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire*, 93–147. t. IX. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892.

Bruce, F.F. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Charles, R.H. *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life: In Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, or, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Eschatology from Pre-Prophetic Times till the Close of the New Testament Canon, Being the First Jowett Lectures Delivered in 1898–99*. 2nd ed. London: Black, 1913.

Chase, F.H. "Peter, Second Epistle Of." In *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 3:796–818. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900.

Collins, Adela Yarbro. *Mark*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress, 2007.

Crossley, James G. *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity*. JSNTSup 266. London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Davids, Peter H. *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. PNTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2006.

Donelson, Lewis R. *I & II Peter and Jude*. NTL. Louisville, Ky.: WJK, 2010.

Dunn, James D.G. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. BNTC. London: Black, 1993.

Foster, Paul. "Peter in Noncanonical Traditions." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, edited by Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado, 222–62. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Foster, Paul. "Polymorphic Christology: Its Origins and Development in Early Christianity." *JTS* 58 (2007): 66–99.

Foster, Paul. "The Relationship between 2 Peter and Early Christian Pseudepigrapha." In *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, edited by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, 179–201. WUNT 389. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Frey, Jörg. "Eschatology in the New Testament—an Introduction: Classical Issues, Disputed Themes, and Current Perspectives." In *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, edited by Jan G. van der Watt, 3–32. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Green, Gene L. *Jude & 2 Peter*. BECNT. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2008.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Harnack, Adolf von. *Bruchstücke des Evangeliums und der Apokalypse des Petrus*. TU 9.2. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893.

Harnack, Adolf von. *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*. Vol. 1. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897.

Harrington, Daniel J. "Jude and 2 Peter." In *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, by Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, 159–299. SP 15. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003.

Hollmann, G. "Der Brief Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus." In *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, edited by Johannes Weiss, 2nd ed., 2:571–96. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907.

Hooker, Morna D. *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. BNTC. London: Black, 1991.

James, M.R. "A New Text of the Apocalypse of Peter." *JTS* 12 (1910–1911): 36–54, 157, 362–83, 573–83.

James, M.R. *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Corrected edition. Oxford: Clarendon, 1963.

James, M.R. *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*. CGTSC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912.

Jefford, Clayton N. *The Apostolic Fathers and the New Testament*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2006.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Jülicher, Adolf. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Translated by Janet Penrose Ward. Translated from the 2nd German Edition (1900). London: Smith, Elder, 1904.

Kelly, J.N.D. *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*. BNTC. London: Black, 1969.

Kloppenborg, John S. "*Evocatio Deorum* and the Date of Mark." *JBL* 124 (2005): 419–50.

Knopf, Rudolf. *Die Briefe Petri und Judä*. 7th ed. KEK. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Lods, A. "L'Évangile et l'Apocalypse de Pierre avec le texte grec du livre d'Hénoch. Text publiés en facsimilé, par l'héliogravure d'après les photographies du manuscript de Gizéh." In *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologique française au Caire*, 217–31, 322–35. t. IX. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1893.

Longenecker, Richard N. *Galatians*. WBC 41. Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1990.

Mayor, Joseph B. *The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*. London: Macmillan, 1907.

Neyrey, Jerome H. *2 Peter, Jude: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37C. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

Prümm, K. "De genuine Apocalypsis Petri textu: Examen testium iam notorum et novi fragmenti Raineriana." *Biblica* 10 (1929): 62–80.

Robinson, J.A., and M.R. James. *The Gospel According to Peter, and the Revelation of Peter: Two Lectures on the Newly Recovered Fragments, Together with the Greek Texts*. London: Clay, 1892.

Sanday, W. *Inspiration: Eight Lectures on the Early History and Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration Being the Bampton Lectures for 1893*. London: Longmans, Green, 1893.

Schmidt, D.H. "The Petrine Writings: Their Redactors and Their Relationships." Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1972.

Simms, A. Ernest. "Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." *The Expositor* 5/8 (1898): 460–71.

Spitta, Friedrich. *Der zweite Brief des Petrus und der Brief des Judas: eine geschichtliche Untersuchung*. Halle a. S.: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1885.

Spitta, Friedrich. "Die Petrusapokalypse und der zweite Petrusbrief." *ZNW* 12 (1911): 237–42.

Swete, H.B. *The Akhmim Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of Saint Peter*. London: Macmillan, 1893.

Tuckett, Christopher M. *2 Clement: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. OAF. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Weinel, H. "Die Offenbarung des Petrus." In *Handbuch zu den Neutestamentlichen Apokryphen*, edited by Edgar Hennecke. Tübingen: Mohr, 1904.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 10

2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* Revisited: A Response to Jörg Frey

Richard Bauckham

I begin with a personal confession: I have not given much thought to 2 Peter since my commentary was published in 1983.[1] Immersed in other concerns and projects, I have done little to keep abreast of scholarship in that small and specialized area of study. I have sometimes wondered whether, if I were to give critical consideration to the proposals and interpretations I offered in the commentary, I would change my mind about anything of significance, but I have not found time to do so. Now, reading Jörg Frey's Radboud Prestige lectures and preparing a response to them, I realise that we are living in something like a renaissance of 2 Peter studies. Since 2000 there have been several major studies of 2 Peter, three of them in the WUNT series,[2] of which Frey is the principal editor.[3] Frey himself is a major player in this renaissance, having written a major commentary,[4] some articles and now his lectures on "Second Peter in New Perspective."

All these and other recent studies[5] raise new questions and make creative advances in the study of 2 Peter that open up the field of discussion in exciting ways. I am struck, for example, by the way the distinctiveness of 2 Peter

1 Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983).

2 Thomas J. Kraus, *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001); Martin G. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*, WUNT 2/300 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

3 In 2001 he was one of three editors.

4 Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015).

5 E.g. James M. Starr, *Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in Its Hellenistic Context*, CBNT 33 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000); Anders Gerdmar, *Rethinking the Judaism-Hellenism Dichotomy: A Historiographical Case Study of Second Peter and Jude*, CBNT 36 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2001); Michael J. Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Other Early Christian Literature*, Academia Biblica 10 (Atlanta; Leiden: SBL; Brill, 2002); Robert L. Webb and Duane F. Watson, eds., *Reading Second Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of Second Peter*, LNTS 382 (London: T. & T. Clark, 2010).

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_011
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

within the context of early Christian literature, canonical and noncanonical, has come into sharper focus, as well as how odd it is that this has been a reason for scholarly neglect of it.[6] It is not surprising that 2 Peter's place in early Christian literature and its intertextual relationships with other Christian literature remain fruitful topics for fresh proposals. It is still one of the most neglected of the New Testament writings, receiving far less attention even than 1 Peter or James,[7] but Frey's new proposals are therefore all the more welcome.

I have decided to limit this response to the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. This is not only because it plays a key part in Frey's "new perspective" on 2 Peter, which, he argues, knows and reacts to the *Apocalypse of Peter*, as do the opponents 2 Peter targets. It is also because, following my work on 2 Peter, the *Apocalypse of Peter* was a major topic of my own research.[8] Moreover, my essay on the literary relationship of 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*,[9] in which I argued that the latter was dependent on the former, has been widely taken as the starting-point for subsequent discussion of that issue.[10] Indeed, most scholars considered that I had proved the point until this was questioned by Gilmour, who argued that a literary relationship was not proven,[11] and Gründstäudl, who argued at length for the dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.[12] Frey, both in his commentary[13] and again in his Radboud Prestige lectures, has followed Gründstäudl, refuting my

6 On this latter point, see Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels*, 134–135.

7 2 Peter gets little attention even in two major recent books about the figure of Peter in early Christianity: Markus Bockmuehl, *The Remembered Peter in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate*, WUNT 262 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado, eds., *Peter in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015).

8 The most important results of this research are embodied in my long essay, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," first published in *Apocrypha* 5 (1994) 7–111, reprinted in Richard Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (NovTSup 93; Leiden: Brill, 1998) 160–258. A number of the other essays in that volume also relate to the *Apocalypse of Peter*. See also Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50; Richard J. Bauckham and Paolo Marrassini, "Apocalypse de Pierre," in *Ecrits apocryphes chrétiens*, ed. François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, vol. 1, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 442 (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 747–74.

9 "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 290–303.

10 E.g. Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels*, 105–155; Kraus, *Sprache*, 390–396; Gründstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 105–144.

11 Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels*, 110–115.

12 Gründstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 97–144.

13 Frey, *Brief*, 170–73.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

main arguments point by point and presenting evidence that favours 2 Peter's dependence on the *Apocalypse*.

It is probably not generally realised that my essay on the relationship of the two texts, though not published until 1998, was written at the time I was working on my commentary, at the beginning of the 1980s.[14] So most of my detailed work on the *Apocalypse of Peter* was undertaken subsequently to writing that essay. This, as well as the work of Gilmour, Gründstäudl and Frey, has made me open to re-examining the issue of 2 Peter's relationship to the *Apocalypse of Peter* in some detail. In what follows I shall argue both, against Gründstäudl and Frey, that dependence by 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter* is implausible, and also, with Gilmour, that the two works are more likely to be entirely independent.

I should make it clear that in what follows I am discussing the relationship of 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* as represented by the Ethiopic version, the two Greek fragments (Bodleian and Rainer) and the patristic quotations.[15] It is now a consensus (with which Frey agrees) that these sources bring us as close as we can get to the original Greek *Apocalypse*, whereas the Akhmim fragment[16] represents a later, considerably reworked edition,[17] which may not even be a form of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but could be part of another Petrine apocryphon (perhaps the Gospel of Peter[18]) that borrowed material from the *Apocalypse of Peter*. I agree with others[19] that the Akhmim text probably does reflect knowledge of 2 Peter, but at a secondary, editorial level that does not, so far as we can tell, represent the original text of the *Apocalypse*.

---

14 Thus in my commentary I was able to rely on a "forthcoming article" as demonstrating the relationship (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 149).

15 For a full collection and edition of these Greek and Latin sources, see Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004), 87–99, 121–30. The Bodleian and Rainer fragments are also edited in Peter van Minnen, "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 15–39, here 34–39.

16 Kraus and Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse*, 101–20.

17 See, most recently, van Minnen, "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*."

18 See Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," 4719–4720.

19 Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels*, 108–110; Kraus, *Sprache*, 391–393; cf. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 294–295. See also Thomas J. Kraus, "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe," *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98, where he argues for the dependence of both the Akhmim fragment and the Bodleian and Rainer fragments on 2 Peter and thereby for the dependence of the original *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

I shall structure the following discussion by posing a number of questions and arguing my own answers to them in discussion with Frey's answers.

1 Does 2 Pet 1:14 Refer to a Known Prophecy of Peter's Death?

Before discussing Frey's view that 2 Pet 1:14 is a reference to the prophecy of Peter's death in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, I find it necessary to discuss at some length whether the verse actually refers to any such prophecy that existed independently of 2 Peter and would have been known to its readers. By no means all commentators have thought this at all obvious,[20] and, although in my commentary I took the view that it does refer to such a prophecy, I have been obliged to reconsider that view.

2 Pet 1:14 reads:

> εἰδὼς ὅτι ταχινή ἐστιν ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματός μου, καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐδήλωσέν μοι·
>
> (… knowing that I must soon be divested of my body, as our Lord Jesus Christ has in fact [or: also] revealed [or: made clear] to me)[21]

An important question is whether Peter's knowledge that he is soon to die derives from two sources or only one? Does the first part of the verse mean that he has some kind of intimation of his approaching death (without specifying how he knows), while the second part means that this has *also* been revealed to him by Jesus Christ? Or does the whole verse refer to the knowledge that has been given to him by Jesus Christ? The question is surprisingly difficult to answer.[22]

In its adverbial use καί "seems to call special attention to what follows it, marking it with prominence."[23] In this context it "intensifies Peter's certainty concerning his approaching death," and should probably be translated "indeed" or "in fact,"[24] though the translation "also" is possible. However, the meaning

20 See, e.g., J.N.D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*, BNTC (London: Black, 1969), 313–14.

21 Translations of 2 Peter are my own.

22 There is a very full discussion in Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 228–42. Frey, *Brief*, 243, leaves the question open.

23 Kermit Titrud, "The Function of Καί in the Greek New Testament and an Application to 2 Peter," in *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*, ed. David Alan Black (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 240–70, here 242.

24 Titrud, "The Function," 260.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of καί does not in itself answer our question, which also turns on the meaning of the conjunction καθώς, which usually has comparative force. When this author uses καθώς καὶ again in 3:15b, we could translate the καί as "in fact" rather than (as in many translations) "also" ("as in fact our dear brother Paul wrote to you").[25] But the meaning is not that Paul is the source of the advice the writer has given his readers in 3:14–15a. The writer gives his own advice on his own authority and then adds that in fact Paul has also given the same advice in his letters. The word καθώς introduces something additional that is compared with what precedes.

So 1:14 could refer to two sources of Peter's knowledge of his approaching death. In my commentary I took this view. I pointed out that it "was a common hagiographical motif that the righteous hero received some kind of intimation of his approaching death before the event, and for obvious reasons this was one of the normal conventions of the testament genre" (to which this part of 2 Peter belongs). Often in such literature the testator's death is revealed to him or her by God, but sometimes there is no indication of how he or she knows they are to die soon. If this conventional motif accounts adequately for 3:14a, why does the writer then add that Peter also had this revealed to him by Christ? I suggested that the "only plausible reason is that there was a well-known dominical prophecy of Peter's death which readers of 2 Peter would know, and so it is natural for the writer to add a reference to this prophecy."[26]

This conclusion led me to discuss the five prophecies of Peter's death by Jesus that are found in early Christian literature (John 13:36; John 21:18; Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R); Acts of Peter; Epistle of Peter to James 2). Arguing that John 21:18 was a traditional saying that existed independently of its context in John 21, I decided that it was the only likely basis for 2 Pet 1:14b.[27] In response to the possible objection that "John 21:18 does not indicate the *time* of Peter's death," I pointed out that it "does indicate that Peter's martyrdom will occur when he is old (γηράσῃς), and this may be a sufficient indication of time to satisfy the requirements of 2 Pet 1:14." If Peter knew independently of the prophecy that his death was imminent, then the prophecy perhaps need not be too precise as to the time of his death. Clearly this argument only works if 1:14 indicates two distinct sources of Peter's knowledge of his approaching death. However, even if the verse does refer to two distinct sources of knowledge, I now find myself

25 Titrud, "The Function," 267.

26 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 199.

27 Ibid., 200–201. I do not understand why Frey, *Brief*, 244, rules out so strongly the possibility that John 21:18 originally existed independently of John's Gospel. There is nothing Johannine about the formulation.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

less than satisfied with this explanation. Since the verse says nothing about Peter's death except that it is coming soon (it does not, for example, indicate that he is going to be executed), one would expect the second source to give this information, as well as the first.

Returning to the issue now, especially in the light of studies of the adverbial καί,[28] I think that probably what 1:14b adds to 1:14a is not a second source of Peter's knowledge, but the greater certainty that is given to it by indicating its one and only source (a revelation to Peter by Jesus Christ). In effect, Peter says, "I know that my death is fast approaching and the reason I can be sure of this is that Jesus Christ himself has revealed it to me." This interpretation of the verse requires that Jesus Christ has revealed to Peter precisely that his death is coming "soon." But it also means that we do not need to suppose that the writer is referring to a prophecy of Peter's death that would already be known to the readers. If revelation by Jesus Christ is the only source of Peter's knowledge that he is to die soon, then the convention that, especially in a testamentary context, righteous people would be expected to be informed by God of their approaching death sufficiently explains the whole verse. Peter is not referring to a prophecy given by Jesus during his earthly life or during the period of the resurrection appearances, but to a revelation made to Peter recently. This is in accordance with the testamentary genre, in which it is only when they are nearing the end of their lives that testators learn that they are soon to die. In Peter's case, his resolve to "arouse" his readers with a "reminder" of his teaching (1:13) is an immediate consequence of this revelation of his approaching death. The revelation was the occasion for the letter (within the fictional context that the pseudepigraphon creates) and need not have been referred to anywhere else in early Christian literature.

I need to stress that when I wrote in my commentary that the "only plausible reason is that there was a well-known dominical prophecy of Peter's death which readers of 2 Peter would know"[29] (words that have been frequently quoted[30]), I was presuming that 2 Pet 1:14 refers to two different sources of revelation and was looking for a reason why the writer should have added a reference to a revelation by Jesus Christ (1:14b) after already referring to an adequate source of Peter's knowledge in v. 14a. Such a reason is not required if 1:14 refers to only one source of Peter's knowledge. In that case, the writer has simply put Jesus Christ in the role that God plays in informing a testator

28 Titrud, "The Function"; Kraus, *Sprache*, 159–162.

29 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 199.

30 Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 232 n. 609; Gründstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, 123 n. 169; Frey, *Brief*, 243.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of his or her approaching death in other examples of the testamentary genre (e.g. Deut 31:2, 14, 16; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.316; Test. Levi 1.2). This convention of the genre sufficiently explains 1:14. There is no need to suppose that the verse refers to a prophecy of Peter's death that would already be known to the readers.

2 Does 2 Pet 1:14 Refer to Apoc.Pet. 14:4(R)?

In view of the conclusion I have just reached, it appears that a reference by 2 Peter to the prophecy of Peter's death in Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) is simply redundant. However, it should also be noticed that Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) does not meet the requirements that a prophecy to which 2 Pet 1:14 referred would demand. As we have seen, the only aspect of Peter's death that is relevant is that it will happen (from the perspective of Peter near the end of his life) "soon." While Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) specifies (in coded language) a number of circumstances of Peter's death (Peter will be put to death in Rome by the emperor Nero), there is no implication that it will be soon. The prophecy is given by the risen Christ just before his ascension to heaven. At the very least it allows time for Peter to travel to Rome before his death will take place, but any early Christian writer would have known that Peter did not die until many years after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. In fact, Apoc. Pet. 14:5 follows the prophecy of Peter's death with a command ("send out my story into the whole world in peace")[31] that implies a considerable period of preaching ministry before his death. I do not know what Frey means when he says that this prophecy of Peter's death (unlike John 21:18) "is phrased as if Peter's death is imminent, not decades in the future."[32] Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) clearly does *not* represent Peter's death as imminent.

Arguably what matters is not how long after the uttering of the prophecy Peter's death is to take place, but whether Peter, recalling it at the stage of his life when he wrote 2 Peter (in the fictional situation that the writer of 2 Peter creates), could have found in it an indication that now the death it predicted was imminent. Supposing he correctly interpreted it, it could tell him he would die in Nero's reign. But, even if the writer did not know that Nero reigned for

31 Translations of the Ethiopic *Apocalypse of Peter* in this essay mostly correspond to the French translation by Paolo Marrassini in Bauckham and Marrassini, "Apocalypse de Pierre," but also take account of other translations, including that of Dennis Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*, SBLDS 97 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988).

32 p. 20 n.64 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

fourteen years, the indication could not be sufficiently precise to meet the requirement of 2 Pet 1:14 that Peter knows his death is to be "soon."

Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) makes several specific points about Peter's death that do not appear in 2 Peter, while failing to provide the one piece of information that 2 Pet 1:14 provides: that Peter's death (from his perspective at the supposed time of writing) will be soon. Even if 2 Pet 1:14 does refer to a prophecy its readers would already know, Apoc. Pet. 14:4(R) cannot be that prophecy.

3 Is 2 Pet 2:16–18 Dependent on Apoc. Pet. 15:1–17:1?

In my essay on the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, I pointed out three parallels between these passages that could suggest a literary relationship: (1) the phrase "the holy mountain" (2 Pet 1:18; Apoc. Pet. 15:1); (2) the phrase "honour and glory" (2 Pet 1:17; Apoc. Pet. 16:5); (3) the voice "from heaven" (2 Pet 1:18; Apoc. Pet. 17:1).[33] These are parallels that do not derive from the transfiguration story in Synoptic Gospels, where the mountain of the transfiguration is called "a high mountain" (Matt 17:1; Mark 9:2) or just "a mountain" (Luke 9:28) and the voice comes from the cloud, not from heaven (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35).

It must be stressed that Apoc. Pet. 15:1–17:1 is not an account of the transfiguration of Jesus, whereas 2 Pet 1:16–18 is.[34] The *Apocalypse of Peter* has undoubtedly drawn on Matthew's narrative of the transfiguration,[35] but has used the borrowings from Matthew to compose a different narrative, in which Jesus is not transfigured at all. Jesus's role here is to show Peter and the other disciples three visions: two glorious personages identified as Moses and Elijah (15:2–16:1a), paradise where the righteous dead rest (16:1b–6) and the heavenly temple (16:7–9). If the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on 2 Peter, it has added a few details from 2 Peter's account of the transfiguration to its much more

33 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 300–302. These three parallels are the basis for Gründstäudl's discussion of the issue (*Petrus Alexandrinus*, 114–115), and are discussed by Frey, *Brief*, 250–251, who thinks that the first two point to dependence by 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

34 This point seems not to be noticed by Frey, while Gründstäudl (*Petrus Alexandrinus*, 120) queries whether the transfiguration of Jesus, though not described, may be presupposed. On the contrary, it is clear that the writer of the *Apocalypse of Peter* does not intend to describe the transfiguration of Jesus, but a different event, for which he has re-used elements of the transfiguration story. See Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse," 240–241.

35 Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," 4723–4724. The reference to "what is written in the book of my Lord Jesus Christ" (16:6) is probably to Matt 5:10.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

substantial borrowings from Matthew. Such dependence on two complementary accounts of the transfiguration is in principle quite plausible. But if 2 Peter is dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it has added material from the latter to material about the transfiguration of Jesus drawn either from Matthew or from independent tradition (as I argued in my commentary[36]). There is no doubt that 2 Peter, unlike the *Apocalypse of Peter*, describes the transfiguration of Jesus. The writer's interest is entirely in what the story says about Jesus. (There is no reference to Moses and Elijah, let alone the rest of the righteous dead.) So there is no possibility that 2 Pet 1:16–18 is dependent solely on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. As to whether it could be dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter* for the three details in which the two texts agree in differing from the Synoptic tradition, it is surely more likely that a writer should draw on two versions of the transfiguration of Jesus to create a different sort of vision than that a writer should draw on one account of the transfiguration of Jesus and on another text in which material from the transfiguration tradition has been re-used for a different purpose. We should also notice that the three parallels that do not derive from Synoptic tradition are widely scattered in the *Apocalypse of Peter* (15:1; 16:5; 17:1), whereas they are close together in 2 Peter (1:17, 18a, 18b). This favours dependence of the former on the latter, though certainly not conclusively.

However, if we look again at the three parallels, we shall see reason to doubt that they are more than coincidences. (1) In 2 Peter the phrase "holy mountain" undoubtedly alludes to Psalm 2:6–7, where the Lord enthrones his Messiah on Zion, his holy mountain, and says to him, "You are my Son."[37] So the phrase is integral to 2 Peter's understanding of the transfiguration of Jesus as his investment with the power and glory with which he is to come at the parousia.[38] In the *Apocalypse of Peter*, where Jesus is not transfigured, the phrase can have no such significance. The mountain in this case is most likely also Mount Zion, but its significance is quite different. Peter and the other disciples are given there a vision of the heavenly temple that replaces the earthly temple on Mount Zion (Apoc. Pet. 16:9).[39] So each of the two writers had his own reason for using the phrase and could have chosen it independently of the other.

(2) According to 2 Pet 1:17, Jesus at the transfiguration received "honour and glory" (τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν) from God the Father. There is probably an allusion to

36 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 205–210. This argument has not convinced other scholars and I shall not press it here. It played a part, but only a part in my judgment that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on 2 Peter.

37 I am surprised that Frey, *Brief*, 254–255, ignores this allusion to Ps 2, just as he ignores the allusion to Ps 8:6 in 2 Pet 1:17.

38 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 221.

39 Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse," 192–193.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Psalm 8:6 LXX: "with glory and honour (δόξῃ καὶ τιμῇ) you crowned him." This passage about "the son of man" (8:5) was applied to Jesus by early Christian exegetes (cf. Heb 1:6–9; 1 Cor 15:27–28). In Apoc. Pet. 16:5 (extant only in the Ethiopic version), the phrase "honour and glory" is applied quite differently. When Peter sees the righteous dead in paradise, he is told by Jesus, "This is the honour and glory of those who are persecuted for my righteousness."[40] The two words are a natural pair (cf. LXX Exod 28:2; Job 37:22; 40:5(10); Pss 28:1; 95:7; Dan 4:27; 1 Macc 14:21; Rom 2:7, 10; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Pet 1:7; Rev 4:9, 11; 5:12, 13; 21:26), and so there is nothing very remarkable in the use of the phrase in both 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. If there were borrowing, it would have to be by the *Apocalypse*, since in 2 Peter the phrase has a specific scriptural source, but probably there is mere coincidence. Moreover, 2 Peter's derivation of both this phrase and the phrase "holy mountain" from psalms that were understood to be messianic shows a consistency of practice—in elaborating details of the transfiguration story—that cannot be similarly attributed to the *Apocalypse of Peter*'s use of these two phrases.

(3) Both texts attribute the divine words ("This is my Son …") to a voice from heaven, but a voice from heaven is a standard feature of apocalyptic visions (Dan 4:31; 1 Enoch 13:8; 65:4; 2 Bar. 13:1; 22:1; Rev 10:4, 8: 11:12; 14:13). It was a natural substitute for the voice from the cloud in the Synoptic transfiguration stories, which would make no sense without the additional information that the cloud overshadowed the figures on the mountain (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:34–35). The *Apocalypse of Peter* actually reserves the cloud for a different function (that of carrying Jesus up to heaven) in 17:2. Furthermore, the very similar divine words in the Synoptic accounts of the baptism of Jesus are attributed to "a voice from heaven" in all three Synoptic Gospels (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22): this could account for this detail in either or both of our Petrine texts. Therefore this parallel, like the others, is not such as to require a literary relationship.

4 Does the Idea of the Cosmic Conflagration (2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12) Derive from the *Apocalypse of Peter* (5:1–8)?

Frey claims that the motif of the destruction of the world by fire was adopted by Jewish writers only in the Sibylline Oracles (2:149–219; 3:80–92; 4:171–89;

40 This translation (by Julian Hills) represents a minor correction of the Ethiopic text (cf. Matt 5:10), which has literally: "This is the honour and glory of those who pursue my righteousness."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

5:209–21).[41] But it is also found in 1QHa 11:26–36 and in the Jewish Pseudo-Sophocles verses,[42] while Josephus refers to a prophecy of Adam that the earth will be destroyed once by fire, once by water (*Ant.* 1.70), just as in 2 Pet 3:6–7. Moreover, although 2 Peter is the only writing in the New Testament in which the idea appears, it is found quite widely in other early Christian literature (2 Clem. 16:3; Justin, *1 Apol.* 20.1–2, 4; 60.8; *2 Apol.* 7.2–3; Theophilus, *Autol.* 2.38; Tatian, *Or. Graec.* 25.2; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 11.1–3) besides the *Apocalypse of Peter*. So the fact that it features in the eschatological scenarios of both 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* is not so remarkable. It is worth noting that the same biblical text (Isa 34:4 LXX B Lucian) ("all the powers of the heavens will melt") is echoed in 2 Pet 3:12; 2 Clem. 16:3 and Apoc. Pet. 5:4, while 2 Clem. 16:3 and Apoc. Pet. 5:6, but not 2 Peter, extend this "melting" to the whole creation. It is clear that there are common traditions taken up in these various texts, involving biblical exegesis as well as borrowing from non-Jewish sources (whether Stoic or Iranian). I see no reason to posit a direct literary relationship between 2 Pet 3 and Apoc. Pet. 5.

5 Does the Phrase "Eternal Kingdom" (of Christ) Indicate Literary Dependence?

In the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Jesus says, "I will go away, I and my elect ones rejoicing with the patriarchs, into my eternal kingdom" (14:2), while 2 Peter speaks of "entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (1:11). In my commentary I pointed out that reference to Christ's, rather than God's kingdom is not very common in early Christian literature (Matt 13:41; 16:28; Luke 1:33; 22:29–30; 23:42; John 18:36–37; 1 Cor 15:24–25; Col 1:13; 2 Tim 4:1, 18; Heb 1:8; 1 Clem. 50:3; 2 Clem. 12:2; Barn. 7:11; Ep. Apost. 39[Eth]) and that these

41 p. 37 in the present volume. In fact, book 2 of the Sibylline Oracles is a Christian work dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter* (parts of it are a close paraphrase of the latter). See, most recently, J.L. Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 131–43.

42 These additional Jewish texts are mentioned by Frey, *Brief*, 334, where he denies that they refer to a real cosmic conflagration. I think he misses the way the traditional Jewish idea of judgment by fire could converge with the (Iranian or Stoic) notion of a cosmic conflagration and refunction the latter in the Jewish eschatological way. In both 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the purpose of the conflagration is judgment, not purification and regeneration as in the Stoic tradition. For Pseudo-Sophocles, see Harold W. Attridge, "Fragments of Pseudo-Greek Poets (Third to Second Century BC)," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985), 821–30, here 826.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

two texts (Apoc. Pet. 14:2; 2 Pet 1:11) are the only ones in which the term "eternal kingdom" is used, either of God's or Christ's kingdom.[43] I should have added that, of course, the *idea* of the eternity of God's kingdom is common (e.g. 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 11:18), while the *idea* of the eternity of Christ's kingdom occurs in Luke 1:33 ("of his kingdom there will be no end"); Heb 1:8; Rev 22:3.

However, the coincidence between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* seems much less remarkable when we realize that both texts allude to Daniel 7:14 ('his dominion is an everlasting dominion [LXX, Θ: ἐξουσία αἰώνιος] … and his kingdom [βασιλεία] is one that shall never be destroyed").[44] When Justin refers to the eternal kingdom (βασιλεία αἰώνιος) of Christ (*Dial.* 32.1; 34.2; 39.7; 46.1; 76.1) he alludes to Dan 7:14.[45] This passage was so central to Christological exegesis of the Old Testament scriptures that it is not in the least surprising to find two Christian writers independently alluding to it. As for the idea of "entry" into this kingdom, found in both texts, it is so common with reference to the kingdom of God (Matt 5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 19:23; Mark 10:23–25; Luke 18:17, 24–25; John 3:5; Acts 14:22; 2 Clem. 6:9; 11:7; Hermas, *Sim.* 9.12.3–8; 9.16.2–4) that it is again not surprising to find it applied in two texts to the kingdom of Christ.[46]

In my view, Frey has hugely exaggerated the significance of the coincidence between these two texts. His statement that, whereas "God's Kingdom can be called eternal, the reign of Christ or of the Messiah is always limited," is not accurate. In the few texts he cites (4 Ezra 7:28; 1 Cor 15:23–28; Rev 20:1–6) it is limited (though for quite different reasons),[47] but most early Christian texts referring to the kingdom of Christ (listed above) say nothing about its duration, while two explicitly assert its eternity (Luke 1:33; Heb 1:8). So there are as many texts in the New Testament asserting the eternity of the kingdom of Christ as there are texts that set a temporal limit to it.[48] Among Jewish texts, 2 Sam 7:13; Ps 89:29–30; Isa 9:7; Ezek 37:25; Dan 7:14 (all understood messianically by late Second Temple period Jews and by early Christians); Pss. Sol. 17:35 all portray the reign of the Messiah as eternal, as does John 12:34, apparently reporting Jewish opinion about the Messiah.

43 Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 191–192.

44 Cf. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 305–306.

45 *Dial.* 116.2; 120.5; 140.2, referring to the eternal kingdom given by Christ to his people, allude to Dan 7:27, as does, probably, Melito, *Pasch.* 476.

46 Cf. Luke 23:43 ("when you come into your kingdom"), but the sense is different.

47 From Jewish literature he could have added 2 Bar. 29–30, but I cannot recall any other examples. The two Jewish apocalypses 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch are closely related; one cannot assume that they are representative of Jewish eschatology on this point.

48 In Rev 20:1–6 it is a matter of a specifically earthly reign along with the martyrs. Christ continues to be included with God the Father in reigning eternally, according to Rev 22:3.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

I conclude that the coincidence between 2 Pet 1:11 and Apoc. Pet. 14:2 is readily explicable without postulating literary dependence.[49]

6 Is 2 Peter's Relationship to Jude Relevant?

As an argument against the dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter, Frey argues that while "2 Peter draws heavily on Jude, there are absolutely no common elements between Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Is it realistic to think that the *Apocalypse* may have used 2 Peter but omitted all the elements from Jude?" The argument is fallacious, because 2 Peter draws on Jude only in parts of the letter (mainly 2:1–18 and 3:1–3) and there are no parallels between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* in those passages.[50] If the *Apocalypse of Peter* was dependent on 2 Peter, then the author made selective use of it, limited to 2 Pet 1:12–18 and 3:5–12. There is therefore nothing especially surprising in the lack of parallels with Jude. If 2 Peter used the *Apocalypse of Peter*, then the writer of 2 Peter was even more selective in what he took from his source. Such arguments are completely inconclusive.

7 How Is the Delay of the Parousia Relevant?

Frey observes, correctly, that "the problem of the eschatological delay is nowhere reflected in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It would be hard to understand why the *Apocalypse of Peter* would adopt the eschatological scenario from 2 Peter without any trace of its intense discussion about the delay of the parousia."[51]

---

49 There are a few more minor parallels between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, that in a fuller treatment would need to be discussed, but Frey attaches no importance to them and so I do not discuss them here.

50 Frey is dependent on the much fuller discussion in Gründstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus,* 137–140. But Gründstäudl makes very misleading use of my list of parallels between 2 Peter and the Apocalypse. He says that I list 20 such parallels (excluding those that are only with the Akhmim text) and that in 17 of these cases there is no parallel with Jude. But my list of parallels was a list of all the parallels that *might* indicate a literary relationship. I list them merely in order to consider every possible case. Most of them I discount as evidence of a literary relationship, and conclude that a literary relationship is "somewhat probable" in the case only of six parallels (Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 303). The parallels I consider impressive are concentrated in two short passages of 2 Peter and two related passages in the Apocalypse: Apoc. Pet. 14:1–4/ 2 Pet 1:4–15, and Apoc. Pet. 15–17/ 2 Pet 1:16–18.

51 p. 21 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

What he fails to observe, here and elsewhere, is that the "problem" of the delay of the parousia is not discussed anywhere in the Christian literature of the second century. This is, in my view, a good argument for dating 2 Peter in the late first century, no earlier and no later.[52] The delay was a problem during the period when it became clear that the first Christian generation had mostly or entirely died (cf. John 21:23–24), apparently falsifying the expectation that the parousia would occur within the lifetime of that generation. But the evidence suggests that the problem was surmounted (2 Peter is part of the evidence of the ways in which it was surmounted) in a relatively short time[53] and did not persist into periods long after the death of the first generation. If the *Apocalypse of Peter* was dependent on 2 Peter, then its author did not think the problem relevant in his time. He himself, like many later Christian authors, espouses a lively imminent expectation, locating himself and his contemporaries in a time of persecution that will shortly be ended when Enoch and Elijah return (2:11–13).

Another aspect of the issue of eschatological delay is the way in which Frey relates Apoc. Pet. 14:4 to the complaint of the "scoffers" in 2 Pet 3:4. He takes up the observation made initially by me[54] and developed in a slightly different way by Tobias Nicklas[55] that the former passage (like Asc. Isa. 4.2–3) views Peter's martyrdom in an eschatological perspective. The passage is quite obscure (even the Greek fragment is faulty and incomplete), but clearly sees Nero as an incarnation of evil and seems to view Peter's martyrdom at his hands as in some way instrumental in the eschatological destruction of the powers of evil. Frey's interpretation is rather general: "The text obviously considers Peter's martyrdom a sign for the beginning of the eschatological events, the destruction of evil powers, and the fulfilment of Jesus's promises (ἐπαγγελίαι) to the elect."[56]

It is probably impossible to be sure of the meaning of Apoc. Pet. 14:4, since ἀφάνεια could mean either "disappearance" or "destruction" and the antecedent

52 Bauckham, *Jude*, 158, 289–295.

53 In my view, 2 Clement should also be dated to this time (cf. 11:1–3).

54 "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95; reprinted in *The Christian World around the New Testament: Collected Essays II*, WUNT 386 (Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2017), 265–323, here 297–304. See also Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse," 246–251.

55 Tobias Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times," in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, ed. Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, LNTS 522 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015), 183–200, here 187–193.

56 P. 20 in the present volume.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of αὐτοῦ is not clear. Nicklas suggests three different interpretations.[57] It still seems to me most likely that the text refers to Peter's martyrdom as the beginning of Nero's destruction, presupposing the traditional martyrological motif that martyrdom brings down God's judgment on the persecutor. In that case the eschatological perspective rather depends on the interpretation of 14:6b (extant only in Ethiopic): "and suddenly the world has been snatched away."

Where Frey breaks new ground is in suggesting that this passage provided the source of the slogan of the "scoffers": "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet 3:4). Their scepticism is directed against the promise in Apoc. Pet. 14:4 that with the death of Peter the eschatological events would begin, whereas (they observe) "since the fathers fell asleep [and here Frey sees a reference especially to the death of Peter], everything remains just as it has been since the beginning of the world" (2 Pet 3:4). In answer to this objection, Peter's testament (2 Peter) provides Peter's own "authentic" interpretation of Jesus's prophecy of his martyrdom, denying that there has ever been a fixed date for the end events. 2 Peter is thus rejecting the *Apocalypse*'s eschatological interpretation of Peter's martyrdom.

This is an ingenious argument, but there is a problem: the relative dates of the two works, about which Frey is never specific, though he seems sure that 2 Peter dates from well into the second century. On Apoc. Pet. 14:4 Nicklas observes:

> [W]here Peter's martyrdom was initially seen as a part of the eschatological "timetable", Peter's death cannot be seen as a thing of the far distant past. The further one is removed from this event, the more difficult it is to argue that anything radical had changed with it. Thus the motif here probably must have emerged in a situation of extreme difficulties for the Christian community—not too distant from Peter's death.[58]

However, Nicklas realises that the *Apocalypse of Peter* itself cannot be so early, if only because of its dependence on Matthew. He dates it no earlier than the first half of the second century, but thinks it possible that "its author took over and incorporated an older motif, which he needed to heighten the importance of its protagonist, Peter."[59]

This means that, while using an older motif, the author of the *Apocalypse* does not himself think of it as requiring that the eschatological events follow

57 Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup.'"
58 Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup,'" 192.
59 Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup,'" 193.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

swiftly from Peter's death. He himself is already reckoning with a delay of at least thirty years since Peter's death. If this was tolerable when the *Apocalypse* was written, why should a further delay of two or three or even more decades make such a difference as to provoke the complaint of the "scoffers" and 2 Peter's concern to reject the link made in the *Apocalypse* between Peter's death and the eschatological events? In the light of the considerable temporal distance between Peter's death and the writing of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, one must question whether readers of the *Apocalypse* would actually have detected the close temporal link between Peter's death and the "promise of his coming" that Frey supposes that both the "scoffers" and the author of 2 Peter saw there. Usually readers of apocalyptic texts that expressed an imminent expectation at the time of writing easily accommodated the texts to their own later temporal perspective.[60] They did not reject them as unfulfilled prophecy. In the case of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it seems that not even its author understood the relevant section to imply the immediacy of eschatological fulfilment that Frey thinks the "scoffers" and the author of 2 Peter would have seen there. Moreover, it has to be said that our own reading of the text is severely hampered both by the obscurity of 14:4 and by uncertainty as to what 14:6 (extant only in Ethiopic) originally said.

At the very least, Frey's argument requires him to discuss how long after Peter's death the *Apocalypse of Peter* could have been written[61] and how much later 2 Peter must have been written to make any material difference to the problem of delay.

8 So Is There a Literary Relationship at All?

I have argued that, if there is a literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, neither Gründstäudl nor Frey has convincingly shown that the former must be dependent on the latter. But I have also concluded that there is, after all, no good evidence of a literary relationship between the two works at all. It should be noted that, in my essay on the subject published

60 The passage I quoted from Lactantius, 77.2.5–8, writing in the fourth century, shows how it was possible to preserve the "eschatological" significance of Peter's martyrdom within a much longer timespan (Bauckham, "The Martyrdom," 301–302; also Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse," 250–251).

61 In setting a *terminus a quo* for the *Apocalypse of Peter*, account should be taken not only of its dependence on Matthew but also of the probable dependence of 3:6 on 4 Ezra 5:33; 8:47.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

in 1998, I concluded only that a literary relationship is "somewhat probable."[62] Gründstäudl and Frey have proceeded on the assumption that I had demonstrated a literary relationship[63] and then have argued that the relationship is the reverse of my proposal. I now think that I did not examine the evidence sufficiently closely.[64] So I have changed my mind and have concluded that the case for a literary relationship is actually very weak. The closest parallels are cases where what each writer says is too integrally related to his own work to be plausibly borrowed from the other, while in every case the parallels are readily explicable as coincidental or reflecting common background. In rejecting a literary relationship I am now in agreement with Martin Ruf[65] and Michael Gilmour, who criticized my case for literary dependence.[66]

9 What about the Contrasting Reception Histories of 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*?

Finally, I shall comment briefly on the question of the early attestation of the two works. Frey thinks that "the scarce attestation of 2 Peter the end of the second century, which can be contrasted with the much better attestation of the *Apocalypse of Peter*" is a reason to question my view that 2 Peter (which in my commentary I dated c. 80) is an earlier text than the *Apocalypse of Peter* (which I have suggested dates from the time of the Bar Kokhba war in the 130s).[67]

I think we should be very cautious about drawing conclusions as to the date of 2 Peter from the lack of clear early attestation.[68] We should remember that it is one of the shortest of the New Testament books (only Titus, Philemon, 2 and 3 John, and Jude are shorter). It would be interesting to know how widely or frequently it is cited by writers of a later period when its canonicity was unquestioned: I suspect infrequently by comparison with most of the New Testament books. We should also remember that only a small proportion of

62 Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," 303.

63 Cf. p. 15 in the present volume: "there is only one writing of the second century for which we can assume a literary connection with 2 Peter."

64 Most of my detailed work on the *Apocalypse of Peter* was done after I wrote that essay.

65 Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 114–119, 594–595. Ruf adds that he would not be surprised if detailed study shows that the *Apocalypse of Peter* is dependent on 2 Peter (595).

66 Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels*, 110–115.

67 P. 16 in the present volume.

68 This is not the place to discuss the possible traces of it before Clement of Alexandria. Gründstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*, doubts that even Clement or Origen knew it (52–74, 236–286).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the Christian literature of the second century has survived and so the evidence for the circulation and knowledge of any of the books of the New Testament is quite limited. The maxim that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence needs to be taken more seriously in discussion of the early attestation of New Testament writings.

It may be that 2 Peter did not quickly circulate widely because it was known, in the circles in which it originated, to be an example of *prosopopoeia*, i.e. the literary device of writing in the person of a famous deceased individual.[69] It did not carry apostolic authority of the first order. It might also have encountered the problem of its easily observed difference from 1 Peter, which gained recognition from an early date (attested by Papias). Finally, as I have suggested earlier in this essay, the problem of the delay of the parousia beyond the first Christian generation does not seem to have been a felt problem beyond the end of the first century, and so 2 Peter's most obvious distinctive contribution would not have been much needed.

It is certainly striking that the Muratorian canon includes the *Apocalypse of Peter*, with the proviso that some do not consider it should be read in church, while ignoring 2 Peter. The second book of the Sibylline Oracles, which is closely dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*, is also early attestation.[70] In fact there is plentiful evidence that, at least from the late second century onwards, the *Apocalypse of Peter* enjoyed considerable popularity.[71] But the reason is clear, both from its content and from the nature of the allusions to it. It provided, what none of the other works of early Christian literature claiming apostolic origin offered: a detailed account of the afterlife, especially the punishments in hell. Indeed, it attributed its account of the afterlife to Jesus himself. It seems that it was not its eventual exclusion from the canon that accounts for its loss of popularity after the fourth century, but the fact that, in this function of describing the afterlife, it was superseded by the *Apocalypse of Paul*, which in its many versions remained a remarkably popular text throughout the medieval

69 In Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 158–162, I argued that it is an example of "transparent" pseudepigraphy.

70 For the possibility that Lucian knew the *Apocalypse of Peter*, see Jan N. Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 305–22, here 309.

71 The main evidence is collected in Attila Jakab, "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity," in *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 174–86. He rejects my statement that the *Apocalypse of Peter* was "a very popular work" (184), but I suspect we merely disagree over how popular is "very popular."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

period in the western church and in various of the eastern churches, while in the Greek and Slavonic speaking east the *Apocalypse of Virgin Mary* in turn superseded the *Apocalypse of Paul*.[72] The evidence of many centuries is that church authorities and Christian believers attached great importance to apocalyptic revelations of the other world, both hell and paradise, and works that purported to provide authoritative accounts of this kind were greatly valued, even when there was no room for them in a closed canon of the Scriptures.[73] The *Apocalypse of Peter* was the first such Christian work (though it had Jewish predecessors) to enjoy such a role. That it was more popular than 2 Peter is not at all surprising.

Bibliography

Attridge, Harold W. "Fragments of Pseudo-Greek Poets (Third to Second Century B.C.)." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. Charlesworth, 2:821–30. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. "Non-Canonical Apocalypses and Prophetic Works." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Apocrypha*, edited by Andrew Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett, 115–37. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50.

Bauckham, Richard J. *The Christian World around the New Testament: Collected Essays II*. WUNT 386. Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2017.

72 Both of these apocalypses had an advantage over the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The latter portrayed the punishments of the wicked after the last judgment. The later apocalypses portrayed the conditions of the wicked and the righteous immediately after death.

73 For a brief account of the tradition of this type of apocalypse, see Richard Bauckham, "Non-Canonical Apocalypses and Prophetic Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Apocrypha*, ed. Andrew Gregory and Christopher M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 115–37, reprinted in Bauckham, *The Christian World,* 583–610, here 588–594.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature." *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95.

Bauckham, Richard J., and Paolo Marrassini. "Apocalypse de Pierre." In *Ecrits apocryphes chrétiens*, edited by François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, 1:747–74. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 442. Paris: Gallimard, 1997.

Bockmuehl, Markus. *The Remembered Peter in Ancient Reception and Modern Debate*. WUNT 262. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Bond, Helen K., and Larry W. Hurtado, eds. *Peter in Early Christianity*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, edited by Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, and Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Buchholz, Dennis. *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek* (*Ethiopic*) *Apocalypse of Peter*. SBLDS 97. Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1988.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Gerdmar, Anders. *Rethinking the Judaism-Hellenism Dichotomy: A Historiographical Case Study of Second Peter and Jude*. CBNT 36. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2001.

Gilmour, Michael J. *The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Other Early Christian Literature*. Academia Biblica 10. Atlanta; Leiden: SBL; Brill, 2002.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Jakab, Attila. "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 174–86. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Kelly, J.N.D. *The Epistles of Peter and Jude*. BNTC. London: Black, 1969.

Kraus, Thomas J. "Die griechische Petrus-Apokalypse und ihre Relation zu ausgewählten Überlieferungsträgern apokalyptischer Stoffe." *Apocrypha* 14 (2003): 73–98.

Kraus, Thomas J. *Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/136. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Lightfoot, J.L. *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Minnen, Peter van. "The Greek *Apocalypse of Peter*." In *The Apocalypse of Peter*, edited by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz, 15–39. Studies in Early Christian Apocrypha 7. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times." In *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, edited by Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, 183–200. LNTS 522. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015.

Ruf, Martin G. *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*. WUNT 2/300. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Starr, James M. *Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in Its Hellenistic Context*. CBNT 33. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000.

Titrud, Kermit. "The Function of Καί in the Greek New Testament and an Application to 2 Peter." In *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*, edited by David Alan Black, 240–70. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.

Webb, Robert L., and Duane F. Watson, eds. *Reading Second Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of Second Peter*. LNTS 382. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

CHAPTER 11

2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Concluding Reflections

Jörg Frey

"New perspectives" need their time, not just to be developed and substantiated, but also to be discussed and tested in the context of related areas of scholarship. Since "new perspectives" are meant to challenge well-established and familiar lines of reasoning, they run the risk of encountering a certain skepticism or even initial rejection. This is to be expected in view of the kind of inertia which is inherent to scholarly discourses and processes. We are all aware of these phenomena, given how "new perspectives" have developed in Pauline scholarship and elsewhere. When such views are first expressed, it initially remains open whether they will be favorably received or plainly rejected, whether they will stimulate fruitful controversies, leading scholarship to new horizons and result in a change of paradigms or even a "scientific revolution," or instead, be largely ignored and soon be remembered only as a scholarly flameout. There is also a difference between "new perspectives" developed in a field where strong exegetical traditions have shaped ways of thinking for decades or even centuries, and "new perspectives" in a field where the aporias of scholarship and the limits of certainty are obvious due to the scarcity of sources and the uncertainties surrounding their interpretation. The interpretation of 2 Peter, its time and place, its situation and background, is such a field where the aporias are well-known to all of us working in this field. Only those who have never entered the thorny thicket of problems may feel entirely certain about their views.

In view of all the possible ways in which a "new perspective" can be received, I am extremely grateful that the "New Perspective on 2 Peter" I have developed in my commentary and in some further essays,[1] based on the inspiring work

1 Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, ThHK 15/II (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015); for the English translation see below note 5. See further Jörg Frey, "Fire and Water? Apocalyptic Imagination and Hellenistic Worldview in 2 Peter," in *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, ed. Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, JSJSup 175 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 451–71; Jörg Frey, "Between Holy Tradition and Christian Virtues? The Use of πίστις/πιστεύειν in Jude and 2 Peter," in *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und*

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2019 | DOI:10.1163/9789004399549_012
Jörg Frey, Matthijs Den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

of Wolfgang Grünstäudl,[2] Tobias Nicklas,[3] Thomas J. Kraus,[4] and some other scholars, mainly in the German-speaking, or Central-European region, has not only been honored with the offer of an English translation,[5] but also by a comprehensive and favorable discussion on the occasion of the 2016 Radboud Prestige Lectures in Nijmegen, as well as through the contributions of a distinguished group of specialists from all over the world, who were willing to react to my Nijmegen presentation of the "New Perspective on 2 Peter," i.e. the

---

hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt, ed. Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, WUNT 373 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 609–40; Jörg Frey, "Hermeneutical Problems Posed by 2 Peter," in *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, ed. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, WUNT 397 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 9–36; Jörg Frey, "Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'," in *Petrusliteratur und Petrusarchäologie: Römische Begegnungen*, ed. Jörg Frey and Martin Wallraff, Rom und der Protestantismus (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming).

2 See in particular his Regensburg doctoral dissertation: Wolfgang Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*, WUNT 2/315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013); Wolfgang Grünstäudl, "Petrus, das Feuer und die Interpretation der Schrift: Beobachtungen zum Weltenbrandmotiv im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, ed. Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, BThS 137 (Neukirchen; Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2013), 183–208; Wolfgang Grünstäudl, "Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament. Zur Konstruktion apostolischer Autorität in OffbPetr und 2 Petr," in *Between Canonical and Apocryphal Texts: Processes of Rewriting, Reception and Interpretation in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Claire Clivaz, Jörg Frey, and Tobias Nicklas, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming), 289–308.

3 See the edition of the *Apocalypse of Peter*: Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*, GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004); see further especially Tobias Nicklas, "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times," in *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, ed. Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, LNTS 522 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015), 183–200; on 2 Peter, see Tobias Nicklas, "'Der geliebte Bruder': Zur Paulusrezeption im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, ed. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, WUNT 397 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 133–50; Tobias Nicklas, "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria," in *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, ed. Luca Arcari, STAC 103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 27–46.

4 See Kraus and Nicklas, *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse*; Thomas J. Kraus, "P.Vindob. G 2325: The So-Called Fayûm-Gospel: Re-Edition and Some Critical Conclusions," in Ad Fontes: *Original Manuscripts and Their Significance for Studying Early Christianity. Selected Essays*, TENT 3 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 69–94.

5 Jörg Frey, *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*, trans. Kathleen Ess (Waco, Tex.: Baylor UP, 2018).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

reading of 2 Peter against the background of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and possibly other non-canonical Petrine documents.

I am well aware of how uncommon this reading is, especially within the context of Anglo-Saxon scholarship. Although the idea that a canonical writing is dependent on, or reacting to noncanonical writings and the discourse situation created by them has been widely accepted with regard to the Sayings Source (Q) or other sources of the canonical Gospels, the idea that an "apostolic" letter might be dependent on a strange apocryphal writing with a problematic textual basis is still uncommon and uncomfortable to many interpreters, perhaps especially those from a conservative or evangelical background. But in view of the aporias around 2 Peter, there is a definite need to honestly take into consideration all possibilities. Thus, the "New Perspective on 2 Peter," developed in my Radboud Prestige Lectures and more thoroughly in my commentary, may be unfamiliar or disturbing, and it is admittedly based on sometimes uncertain data (textually, linguistically, and historically), but it is a perspective worth being tested because of its gains for the interpretation of a notoriously enigmatic writing. I hope that the English translation of my commentary on Jude and 2 Peter recently released by Baylor University Press,[6] will make my arguments and my interpretation of the texts accessible to a wider audience and thus further stimulate the debate.

As already mentioned, I feel deeply honored by the willingness of a strong group of specialists to respond to my views. As was to be expected, the responses vary considerably. Some reject my "new perspective" outright,[7] while others accept it and draw on it to develop new arguments of their own,[8] and yet a third group proposes various mediating positions, accepting some but not all aspects of my proposal.[9] With the exception of Tobias Nicklas, none of the respondents is closely linked to my own research, and I am particularly thrilled by the fact that the "grandseigneur" of Anglophone scholarship on 2 Peter, Richard Bauckham, has accepted the invitation to comment on my lectures. With his magisterial commentary, he has laid the foundation for much future work on 2 Peter,[10] and he is also responsible for some of the most

6 See previous footnote.

7 Here, I should mention the responses by Richard Bauckham and Paul Foster.

8 Thus, in particular, the contributions by Jan Bremmer and Tobias Nicklas.

9 Here, I can mention the responses by Jeremy Hultin (who accepts the dependence from the *Apocalypse of Peter*, but rejects other basic aspects of my interpretation), Terrence Callan, David R. Nienhuis and Martin G. Ruf.

10 Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, WBC 50 (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983); see also Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3713–52.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

thorough research on the long-neglected *Apocalypse of Peter*.[11] I humbly confess that I have learned much from his work, and even where I did not follow his views, I still admired his meticulous and learned work, which is deeply conservative but always honestly acknowledges contradicting evidence. As far as I can see, his reasoning is still unsurpassed among English-language commentaries on Jude and 2 Peter. Because Bauckham did the utmost to establish a relatively early date for 2 Peter (and the dependence of the *Apocalypse of Peter* on 2 Peter), there is a clear relation with my new perspective, which argues instead for a late date for 2 Peter and its dependence on the non-canonical *Apocalypse of Peter*.

Of course, it is impossible to discuss all of the detailed arguments presented in the eight responses to my lectures. I have to limit myself to a number of select issues, but I do hope to do justice to all of my esteemed colleagues, at least for the present occasion.

a) As already mentioned, the place of honor should be given to *Richard Bauckham* who actually finished his works on 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* long ago. As Matthijs den Dulk has noticed in his introduction to the present volume,[12] Bauckham's response to my "new perspective" is the first time that he returns to the question of 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* since his publications in the 1980s and 90s. And although these publications established a view that I contest in my recent writings, Bauckham does not straightaway reject my views by referring to his earlier works, but instead modifies his position toward a new, much more cautious view. He is well aware of the complicated nature of the material and he acknowledges that certainty is often elusive due to the text-critical problems and the differences between the Old Ethiopic and Greek texts. It marks the nobility of a great scholar that he accepts that a view developed twenty to thirty years ago now needs to be changed or even corrected, and Bauckham deserves the utmost respect for his open-mindedness and willingness to revise his earlier views.

Bauckham begins his contribution by appreciating the progress that has been made in scholarship on 2 Peter since his own works in the 1980s and 90s,

11 Cf., in particular, Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research," *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50; Richard J. Bauckham, "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 160–258; Richard J. Bauckham, "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter," in *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, NovTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 290–303. As Bauckham mentions (see above p. 263), this article, although published only in 1998, was also written in the beginning of the 80s, when Bauckham wrote his commentary.

12 See above, p. 5.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

in particular the increase of precision and differentiation that has enabled us to better perceive the uniqueness of 2 Peter within early Christian literature. In modification of his earlier study on the literary relationship between 2 Peter the *Apocalypse of Peter* (which was written in the early 1980s, but published only in 1998), Bauckham now rejects any literary dependence between the two works, favoring the mutual independence that was already suggested in 2002 by Michael Gilmour[13] and also supported by Martin G. Ruf in his dissertation.[14] This is an important modification of Bauckham's position, even if Wolfgang Grünstäudl and I have not succeeded in convincing Bauckham of the hypothesis of a reversed literary dependence.

Bauckham first discusses the issue of whether 2 Pet 1:14 actually refers to a prophecy of Peter's death[15] and discusses the meaning of the καθὼς καί which is now interpreted as a confirmation, rather than a reference to a second source of knowledge. Thus, Bauckham revises his earlier view that 2 Pet 1:14 refers to the well-known prophecy of Peter's death attested in John 21:18 and denies that 2 Pet 1:14b refers to anything other than some inner revelation of Christ to the aged Peter confirming that his death is impending. I am not sure, however, whether this can be derived from καθὼς καί in 2 Pet 3:15, and the readers of 2 Peter might still be triggered to remember what they likely knew about Christ foretelling Peter's death—from John 21:18 or elsewhere. Thus, the possibility of a further tradition about Peter's impending death is not ruled out, although the reference in 2 Pet 1:14 is far from clear, especially as it is a rather common element of the genre of farewell texts.

A more important argument is that the prophecy of Peter's death in Apoc. Pet. 14:4 (R) does not point to a "near" or impending death, but, since it is situated in the context of Jesus's appearance around Easter, refers to a martyrdom at some point in the future. But again, this argument is far from compelling: Jesus's apocalyptic outlook in his Easter appearance provides a concise view of the events that take place prior to the final salvation, so the time perspective may be condensed. Furthermore, from the perspective of the readers of 2 Peter who are aware of Peter's martyrdom in Rome under Nero, the brief reference in 2 Pet 1:14 may appear as a reference to a prophecy of Peter's death, if they know

13 Michael J. Gilmour, *The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Other Early Christian Literature*, Academia Biblica 10 (Atlanta: SBL; Brill, 2002).

14 Martin G. Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*, WUNT 2/300 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 594–95 (on his contribution in the present volume, see below, 294–96).

15 As Bauckham had assumed in his commentary (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 200–201); see also Richard J. Bauckham, "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 551–52.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

such a prophecy—especially as there are very few early prophecies of Peter's death by Jesus, i.e. only John 21:18 and Apoc. Pet. 14:4 (R), whereas all the other texts are considerably later.

Bauckham subsequently discusses the parallels between the two texts in the reference to the transfiguration. Of course, in Apoc. Pet. 15:1–17:1, the transfiguration is not an event during the life of Jesus; it is transposed into the eschaton. However, the account can still be considered a representation of the Synoptic transfiguration tradition. Departing from his earlier argument, Bauckham now prefers to see the parallels as mere coincidences, possibly inspired by Old Testament passages, with the result that it is impossible to establish any literary dependence on this basis. On the decisive point, however, he remains unclear:[16] If 2 Peter draws on Matthew, not on an otherwise unknown, independent tradition, the three points where 2 Peter departs from Matthew can be found together only in the account of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, so that the possibility that 2 Peter took its inspiration from that source cannot be so easily dismissed.

The idea of the conflagration would require a more thorough discussion. Bauckham does not regard the parallels as evidence of literary dependence. I happily concede that there is almost no verbal agreement, but it is still important to see that this idea, which is so uncommon in early Christianity (and could never be adopted in its Stoic form),[17] is present in both texts, and that in both texts, the conflagration seems to be not the judgment itself (or at least: not the whole judgment) but rather a preparatory act for the judgment which is, then, enacted by the returning Christ. In my view, this common structure best explains (without the methodologically problematic solution of positing otherwise unknown traditions) the striking "non-christological" character of the judgment or dissolution of the world in 2 Peter 3:5–12.

Bauckham rightly argues that also the common phrase "eternal kingdom" (of Christ) as such does not prove literary dependence, but this is true for most of the parallels, if they are considered in isolation. As I have stated in

16 Cf. above page 269, note 36, where Bauckham cautiously steps back from the assumptions made in his commentary.

17 Nor could it be adopted as such in the Jewish tradition. 1QHa 11:26–36 with its metaphorical use of the fire motif is not a conflagration, nor is there visible Stoic influence in the Qumran Sectarian texts. The Pseudo-Sophocles fragment, probably also from Alexandria, is close to the Sibylline Oracles and shows how (only) in this very Hellenized tradition of Jewish literature, these Stoic ideas could be adopted. For the necessary distinctions, see the important article by Pieter W. van der Horst, "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity," in *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 227–51.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

my commentary, it is the cumulative weight of the observations that makes the case. Similarly, the observation that the *Apocalypse of Peter* does not adopt anything of the materials 2 Peter takes from Jude is only a minor argument for my case. Even if the *Apocalypse* were dependent on 2 Peter, we could expect that it primarily adopts the "Peter materials" from 2 Peter 1 and 3, not the polemical sections or the Scriptural allusions from 2 Peter 2.

With regard to the references to the parousia and its delay, Bauckham points out some problems in my argument: If the idea that the martyrdom of Peter was linked to the eschatological events "emerged in a situation … not too distant from Peter's death,"[18] possibly still in the first century, one must explain how this would still seem plausible when the *Apocalypse of Peter* was composed perhaps two or three decades later, and how it could then, again somewhat later, constitute a stumbling stone for the "scoffers" referred to in 2 Pet 3:3–4. Bauckham is right to ask for clarification, both about the relative dates of the two works and about the reason why a further delay of two or three decades would have made such a difference that the concept that the eschatological events would follow Peter's death became implausible and a reason for a more general skepticism. We should not forget, however, that such an expectation would likely have been received differently in different circles. What might appear plausible to the adherents of an apocalyptic tradition could well have been suspect from the very beginning to other, more educated or even philosophically trained circles. Thus, the faithful adherents of apocalyptic expectations and the skeptical "scoffers" could well have been contemporaries, and in my interpretation 2 Peter is "rescuing" not just the expectation of the parousia but also the image of Peter from the suspect association with an expectation that could appear all-too naïve, at least within more educated circles.

Thus, I happily embrace Bauckham's cautioning with regard to literary dependencies, and I will admit that not every argument is conclusive in itself. But in view of the cumulative weight of the observations and the interpretive gains for reading the epistle as a whole, my "new perspective" remains a valid option despite Bauckham's questions and observations. Connecting the two documents and situating them within a common "Petrine discourse" that likely took shape primarily in Alexandria, would seem to better explain the rationale behind the composition of 2 Peter than keeping the two texts separate and assuming complete literary independence. The eschatology of 2 Peter 3 in particular is much more intelligible in light of some aspects from the *Apocalypse of Peter*, i.e. the connection of the end-time events with the death of the generation of the first witnesses and the striking pattern of a conflagration of the

18 Thus Nicklas, "Drink the Cup," 192, quoted by Bauckham, see above p. 274.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

world through fire that prepares for the judgment of the works (2 Pet 3:10). Ultimately, it is the interpretation that must convince, even as we acknowledge the numerous historical uncertainties that necessarily remain.

b) In his thorough response, *Paul Foster*, one of the eminent specialists on Petrine literature[19] also focuses on the literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Some of the arguments presented by Bauckham also appear in his contribution. But before discussing the connections in detail, Foster provides a useful survey of the scholarly discussion of the dating of 2 Peter and of the contribution of the earlier debates about the *Apocalypse of Peter* to the dating of 2 Peter. Here, he mentions the fact that, e.g., M.R. James did "not even entertain as one of his possibilities … the option that it may have been 2 Peter that was dependent on the *Apocalypse of Peter*",[20] whereas Adolf von Harnack freely assumed a dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter*. The example shows how already in the earliest period of scholarship on the *Apocalypse of Peter* the different options were discussed, but that some scholars would not have even considered questioning the general assumption of canonical priority. We should not be surprised that such a persistence of certain scholarly or ecclesiastical traditions can be observed until the present day.

In discussing the main arguments for the priority of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Foster first considers the passages about the transfiguration. Comparing the heavenly voice in 2 Pet 1:17 and the Synoptics, Foster supports my view (against Bauckham) that 2 Peter is not independent of Matthew. With regard to the parallel mention of the "holy mountain", he points to a further parallel in the *Acts of Peter* which may weaken the case for direct literary dependence, leading him to suggest that the parallels may reflect "a more widely circulating change to the transfiguration story as it was retold in later Christian literary accounts."[21] Since the third similarity, the mention of "honor and glory" also cannot positively prove literary dependence, Foster concludes that "none of the three cases is decisive", although he concedes that "the cumulative weight of the similarities is … an important factor to take into consideration."[22]

19 Cf. his commentary on the Gospel of Peter: Paul Foster, *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary*, TENT 4 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010); Paul Foster, "Peter in Noncanonical Traditions," in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015), 222–62; Paul Foster, "The Relationship between 2 Peter and Early Christian Pseudepigrapha," in *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, ed. Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, WUNT 397 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 179–201.

20 See above, p. 226.

21 Foster, p. 243.

22 Foster, p. 244.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

In his analysis of the parallels between the references to Peter's death in 2 Pet 1:14 and *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4 (R), Foster again stresses that there is very little verbal agreement. While the verb δηλόω is shared, the differences are "more striking" in his view, so that Foster again concludes that the two passages (and John 21:18–19) must be independent ways "to account for the sense of loss … in believing communities after the death of Peter."[23] The argument is similar with regard to the conflagration, where Foster concedes that "both texts inhabit the same thought world … but beyond this there is little evidence of direct literary borrowing."[24]

But this type of argument also raises questions. How is "literary dependence" conceptualized? We are probably in agreement that in the present case "dependence" differs from the type of dependence we can determine between the Synoptic Gospels. But simply counting or weighing agreements and differences has also been a problematic argument in the discussion on the relationship between, e.g. John and Mark, or the Gospel of Thomas and the Synoptics. In these cases, the differences largely outweigh the agreements, but this does not mean that there is independence or ignorance of the respective traditions. If we conceive of "literary dependence" in terms of the sort of connection we observe among the Synoptic gospels, all the parallels between the *Apocalypse of Peter* and 2 Peter must appear inconclusive. But this is to some extent to be expected, because the genres, themes, and length of the texts differ, and of course, there is also much uncertainty about the original text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Thus, our evaluation of this possibility must take into consideration other aspects, e.g. the fact that there are only very few references to the transfiguration or to Peter's martyrdom in the first two centuries or that the idea of a final conflagration is only very rarely adopted in early Christianity. Furthermore, if it is conceded that 2 Peter knows Matthew, the few details in which his brief epistolary reference to the transfiguration does differ from Matthew are indeed significant and this raises the question whether these deviations are all accidental or whether they might be inspired by another version of the transfiguration the author knew or had in mind when writing 2 Pet 1:16–18. We cannot assume that he author of 2 Peter had either Matthew or the *Apocalypse of Peter* sitting on his desk, and his free use of other sources (the Scriptures, the Pauline Epistles etc.) does not suggest that he was in the habit of copying sources verbatim. But when incorporating an otherwise rarely adopted tradition, even a small number of parallels may be significant and may point to the influence of another version. Such a version, exhibiting

23 Foster, p. 248.

24 Foster, p. 250.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

precisely those non-Matthean details in 2 Peter's account of the transfiguration, is known from the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Thus we cannot minimize these points of contact as "slight and brief,"[25] as Foster does.

Moreover, Foster's attempt to disentangle the texts here needs support from a more substantial argument with respect to the development of the text of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. It is true that most of the parallels discussed are only in the Ethiopic version, not in the Akhmim text. But Foster's speculation that the account of the transfiguration may have developed from the idea of an epiphany on a mountain (in the Akhmim fragment) to a full transfiguration account (as in the Ethiopic text) cannot be substantiated from the given texts and therefore remains speculative.

Foster's response, then, leaves us with the question how the relationship between the two texts that—despite all the differences in length, genre, and theology—share parts of a common thought world and some otherwise rarely adopted traditions can be construed. Perhaps our methodological tools and criteria, which were historically primarily honed in the study of the Synoptics, are not fully appropriate for texts with such an unclear and complicated transmission history, so that our results will always suffer from a lack of certainty.

c) In contrast to Bauckham and Foster, *Jeremy Hultin*, who is preparing the commentary on 2 Peter in the Hermeneia series, agrees with the view that the author of 2 Peter knew the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He is less persuaded, however, by my suggestions with respect to how 2 Peter draws on the *Apocalypse of Peter* and how this text can shed light on 2 Peter 3.[26] Hultin's response is a fresh proposal concerning the theme of time and eschatology in 2 Peter which cannot be fully discussed here. Hultin first looks at the way later authors who knew the *Apocalypse of Peter*, e.g. the "Hellene" in Macarius Magnes's *Apocriticus*, adopted that text, and he finds none of them reacting to eschatological expectations connected with the martyrdom of Peter. Hultin also points to the absence of the themes of Roman rule or antichrist traditions in 2 Peter 3 and concludes from this silence that "2 Peter was not written to deal with disappointment about *Apoc. Pet.* 14:4." The scoffers' skepticism in 2 Pet 3:4 seems to be "born from reflection on the *longue durée*" rather than from "some short-term disappointment about the delay of Christ's second coming or the failure of Peter's death to bring down Rome."[27] In Hultin's view, 2 Pet 3:5–13 is not about the "delay" of the parousia but rather about the transposition from time to eternity and the fulfilment of the promise of the new world (2 Pet 3:13). In my view,

25 Foster, p. 256.
26 Hultin, p. 161.
27 Hultin p. 163.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

this is a very interesting approach, although the main interest in some kind of "philosophical" eschatology is by no means incompatible with the connection of 2 Peter to a certain "Petrine discourse." The link to Peter is obvious in the author's construction of the letter, regardless of how important the reference to Peter's death (2 Pet 1:14) or the disappointment about the ongoing time was for the addressees of the epistle and their contemporaries.

In a thorough analysis of the reaction of Macarius Magnes's "Hellene", Hultin points to the issues of the imperishability of the world and the foolishness of the idea of the conflagration to the Greeks. Therefore, he interprets the skepticism uttered in 2 Pet 3:4 primarily from ancient cosmology and common sense which is also in coherence with some Scriptural passages. 2 Peter's language is, then, interpreted by Hultin as an attempt to make Christian teaching more credible and less liable to contemporary standard attacks. Here, I also happily agree with Hultin, as I also consider the author of 2 Peter a very learned person who sought to interact with contemporary philosophical and cosmological thought.

Most importantly, Hultin interprets the eschatological destruction or conflagration not as a part of God's irrational anger or judgment but as a transition into eternity (2 Pet 3:13), or an escape from the perishability in the world (cf. 2 Pet 1:4). In this view, the author serves as an apologist against philosophical criticism. This interesting idea may provide more coherence to the eschatological ideas in 2 Pet 1:3–11 and 3:5–13, although I wonder whether the apocalyptic tradition is not too easily bended in the philosophical direction.[28]

Hultin interprets the reference to the conflagration in 2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12 in the light of Or. Sib. 2.196–213, a text that was also familiar with the *Apocalypse of Peter*. He points to the fact that in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the conflagration is placed "on the day of judgment" (Apoc. Pet. 5:1–2 [E]), i.e. it is not merely a preparatory act that precedes the judgment. It should be noticed, however, that the coming of Christ is not mentioned before *Apoc. Pet.* 6, thus it only happens after the conflagration, and the judgment enacted by Christ is therefore separate from the conflagration. This shows at least that the conceptual connection between "day of God", judgment, and parousia is not very precise in *Apoc. Pet.* 4–6, but the sequence of chs. 4–5 and 6 can help to explain the alleged "non-Christological" character of 2 Pet 3:5–13 that has often struck interpreters, at least as long as the passage is considered a defense of the parousia of Christ.

The main point of difference with my interpretation is, then, in the understanding of 2 Pet 3:10. In my commentary, I defend the reading καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ ἔργα εὑρεθήσεται which has the best attestation in the Greek tradition and

28 On the tensions between the two traditions, see Frey, "Fire and Water?"

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

was preferred until the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland's Novum Testamentum Graece. This reading implies that the heaven and the elements are dissolved whereas the earth and its works "will be found." Whereas the Nestle-Aland committee (when crafting the Editio Critica Maior) considered the reading εὑρεθήσεται totally inconceivable[29] and, therefore, conjectured a negation οὐχ (which is not attested in the Greek tradition, but only in secondary translations which may already reflect interpretive difficulties), to the effect that the new text (οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται) now says that even the earth and its works will not be found, i.e. that heaven and earth, the whole world will be destroyed or dissolved. The text-critical question is, however, how the negation could have dropped out so early and disappeared virtually entirely from the textual tradition. Based on the evidence of Apoc. Pet. 5 (cf. 2 Clem 16:3), Wolfgang Grünstäudl and I tried to demonstrate[30] that the reading εὑρεθήσεται is perfectly intelligible, insofar as the dissolution of the heaven and elements is regarded as a kind of preparation for the judgment: If God is the acting subject in this whole sequence of events, the earth and its works become visible before his eyes. If this is true, there is no need to conjecture a text otherwise unattested in Greek, and this text-critical verdict should methodologically precede all further interpretive steps.

Hultin, instead, follows the decision of the Nestle-Aland committee and defends the logic of the text from the evidence of the Sibylline Oracles where the whole world is similarly brought to destruction, and with the support of some other texts in which "the works" refers not to human works on earth but to the works of God, i.e. the creation. He thus interprets 2 Pet 3:10d with the reading οὐχ εὑρεθήσεται as a reference to the complete destruction of the world[31] and adduces from evidence of various Jewish and Christian texts on judgment that the conjectured text of NA[28] is (also) conceivable. But this implies the dismissal of the better attested and by no means inconceivable reading and is, therefore, methodologically questionable.

29 D.C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 308–9.

30 Grünstäudl, "Petrus, das Feuer und die Interpretation der Schrift," 200–202; Frey, *Brief*, 347–49 (= *Letter*, 410–413).

31 Methodologically I cannot agree here, as the conjecture of οὐχ is unwarranted und unsupported by the Greek evidence. Whether the Syriac or Coptic versions refer to some Greek original is rather speculative, and it should be explained in any case how the negation could be omitted so early and almost universally. If the text-critical decision is made properly, we have to accept the text without the negation. In view of the great influence and the almost monopolistic position of the Nestle-Aland committee, exegetes should generally not uncritically follow their decisions but maintain their own text-critical judgment.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Hultin's suggestion to read 2 Peter 3 as an apology in the framework of philosophical debates on the fragility of the world and in light of the quest to partake in the incorruptible divine nature deserves thorough discussion and consideration, whether the reaction to Peter, his martyrdom and death is a part of the rationale behind 2 Peter or not. In any case I appreciate that this future commentator does embrace my view that 2 Peter draws on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

d) In his cautiously crafted response, which features a modified quotation from the famous "Quo vadis" scene in its title, which nicely highlights the tension between the "Roman" Peter of the tradition and the "Alexandrian" Peter of the "New Perspective on 2 Peter", *Martin G. Ruf* critically evaluates the challenges created by this new perspective. While cautiously accepting the arguments for an Alexandrian origin of 2 Peter, he remains reluctant with regard to the literary relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse*. In his PhD dissertation, Ruf provided a thorough analysis of the intertextual relations of 2 Peter, without giving much weight to the *Apocalypse of Peter* with its complicated textual problems. In the concluding chapter of that work, he tentatively suggested (more cautiously than Bauckham) that 2 Peter might be a pretext of the *Apocalypse*,[32] which means that the *Apocalypse* could not serve as an aid for understanding the composition of 2 Peter.

In his present contribution, Ruf acknowledges the points of contact between both works but doubts whether any form of dependence can be established on the basis of the sources, so that he limits himself to the cautious suggestion that both writings contributed to "the same discourse."[33] For Ruf, the discovery of this discourse is a valuable insight. The pattern of a "discourse" is indeed a relatively open way of interrelating texts for which the hard proof of literary dependence is not necessarily required.[34] The question is, however, whether two writings contributing to one and the same discourse actually respond to each other or influence each other. How can we reconstruct that discourse without taking into consideration the possibility of (direct) contact between the texts? While fully appreciating Ruf's methodological caution, I think that at least a hypothetical or tentative attempt at an answer is needed in order to gain some interpretive traction with respect to such a "discourse."

Ruf subsequently addresses a number of critical questions concerning 2 Peter. First, he discusses the important issue whether the pseudepigraphy of the letter was transparent to (some of) its first readers or not. Drawing on

32 Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 595 n. 34.

33 Ruf, p. 209.

34 See also my "Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs.'"

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

one of my earlier publications on 2 Peter (in which I had not yet embraced the perspectives offered by Grünstäudl's work),[35] Ruf discusses the setting in which 2 Peter was read and suggests a less educated milieu of addressees, to whom the epistle was read in the context of private dinners. I doubt, however, whether this reconstruction is valid. First, the possibility that the "false teachers" got hold of their "victims" at private events does not exclude that there were community meetings in which the epistle was meant to be read. Second, the act of reading an epistle in a community meeting does not mean that the addressees or hearers were uneducated and illiterate, nor does it preclude the possibility that they privately studied this letter along with the Pauline Epistles and other literature. The language of 2 Peter seems to suggest a higher ability of the hearers or readers who are—as Ruf himself has shown—expected to appreciate allusions to a wide range of Jewish, Christian, and also pagan writings. Whether this means that they could decipher the literary fiction or not is still a much-disputed question. I would not rule out a certain awareness of literary conventions of *prosopopoiia* or figured speech, at least on the part of some of the early readers of the text, but the claim that the authorial fiction was "entirely transparent"[36] is certainly too bold. In that case, the author's very substantial efforts to endow his message with Petrine authority would be in vain.

In any case, Ruf now acknowledges that the *Apocalypse of Peter* can shed light on the interpretation of 2 Peter. One example is the textual problem of 2 Pet 3:10 where Ruf, in contrast with Hultin, agrees that the emendation in the Editio Critica Major is unnecessary if the text can be understood on the basis of the parallel discussion about conflagration in the *Apocalypse of Peter*. In another instance, the interpretation of the "fathers" in 2 Pet 3:4, Ruf defends his earlier view that the "fathers" refer to the Fathers of Israel, citing a parallel in 2 Baruch where it is said that the Fathers "sleep." It is true that the consideration of Jewish intertexts is important and should not be abandoned even in the interpretation of such a late New Testament text. But the question is whether the term (which is of central relevance for the identity of Israel and Judaism and, therefore, functions in that particular way in the case of 2 Baruch) conveys the same meaning in a Jewish Apocalypse as in a Gentile Christian text from the (early or middle) second century. Therefore, I still consider the reference to the first Christian generation and, more specifically, to the death of Peter (and his contemporaries) more helpful for understanding

35 Jörg Frey, "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, ed. Jörg Frey et al., WUNT 246 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 683–732.

36 Thus Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 134, cited by Ruf, p. 197.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

the theme of the parousia in 2 Pet 3 than the suggestion that the fathers of Israel, who are never associated with the expectation of the "coming" of God, let alone the parousia of Jesus, are in view here.

Ruf partly adopts the new perspective while rejecting a number of major aspects in favor of the lines of interpretation he developed in his dissertation. His plea not to forget the links with the texts of the Roman West, the Apostolic Fathers, and other Christian literature is certainly to be commended, even if the Alexandrian context is considered plausible.

e) Support for the case of a literary dependence of 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* and for the origin of 2 Peter in Alexandria around the middle of the second century is also expressed by *Terrence Callan* in his essay.[37] But having stated this, Callan does not directly enter the debate of the issues related to my "new perspective" but seeks to offer support for two literary connections that have met with more skepticism in recent scholarship: the knowledge of the works of Flavius Josephus, and the identity of the opponents as Gnostics, more precisely, as followers of Basilides.

In the first part of his essay, Callan seeks to widen the range of literary sources of 2 Peter by arguing for the author's knowledge and reception of Josephus. As Ruf has already shown in his study of the intertextuality of 2 Peter,[38] such a knowledge of Hellenistic Jewish texts and traditions cannot be ruled out, in particular for such an educated writer as the author of 2 Peter. The question remains, however, whether the examples presented here, with a few matching words or thematic sequences, can serve as proof of a literary relationship.

Callan's second concern is 2 Peter's relationship with Gnosticism. It is true that with the late dating of 2 Peter that I support, the question of emerging Gnosticism comes once again to the fore, as a constitutive part of the world out of which 2 Peter originates. As Tobias Nicklas in his contribution in the present volume shows, the author's use of γνῶσις and ἐπίγνωσις could create an image of Peter that made him eligible to function as a "hero" of later Gnostic texts, and if 2 Peter is to be located somewhere in the context of Clement of Alexandria, it may also be a step toward a view of Christianity as a certain kind of knowledge (γνῶσις).[39] In Alexandria, Basilides was active as a teacher who initiated a "school" of Christian Gnostic teaching. Furthermore, the high

37 In so doing, Callan seems to modify his views as expressed in his commentary: Terrance Callan, *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014).

38 Ruf, *Die heiligen Propheten*, 567–569.

39 See also my article "Between Holy Tradition and Christian Virtues? The Use of πίστις/πιστεύειν in Jude and 2 Peter."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

esteem for "knowledge" and related topics in 2 Peter can likewise be assumed for the opponents of 2 Peter, although the dispute with the opponents is not about "knowledge" (unlike in 1 Tim 6:20), but about other topics.

On the other hand, the attempt to see the opponents in the mirror of the Gnostic teachings reported by the ancient heresiologists such as Irenaeus is in my view too uncritical and ignores the differentiations arrived at in more recent scholarship on Gnosticism, in particular since the Nag Hammadi discoveries. In my commentary,[40] one of my most important aims was to critically analyze the polemical charges against the opponents in order to distinguish between merely polemical *topoi* that were commonly used against all kinds of deviant teachers and those charges that actually reflected the topics debated and could thus serve to bring the profile of the opponents into focus. Since most of the charges that lead to an identification of the opponents as Gnostics (on the basis of later heresiological accounts) can be considered polemical *topoi*, we should be hesitant to readily apply the label "Gnostics" when describing the image of the opponents of 2 Peter and other New Testament letters. But since teachers such as Basilides might have been part of the world out of which 2 Peter originates, Callan has reopened an important discussion.

f) The contribution by *David Nienhuis* generally acknowledges the "new perspective" presented in my lectures as a useful tool to read 2 Peter within its historical context, although, as "an interpreter of scripture for the church,"[41] Nienhuis is particularly interested in understanding the letter in its canonical context, in which 2 Peter was accepted, while the *Apocalypse of Peter* was not. This is a legitimate focus, although I would like to note that I too understand my task as an interpreter of the Scriptures to be in the service of the church, but that for me this does not imply a restriction of historical perspectives, or even an anachronistic limitation to merely canonical texts. Rather, research on "canonical processes" has taught us about the variety of factors and often incidental phenomena that ultimately led to the final shape of the (Jewish and Christian) canons. But in spite of these historical contingencies, the search for the canonical logic is a useful and legitimate question.

Nienhuis, then, adopts the language of a "Petrine discourse" to identify contacts between 1 Peter and 2 Peter in order to argue that the author composed his letter "as a companion piece for the authoritative letter of Peter that was

40 See my earlier discussion of polemical topoi in the epistles of Jude and 2 Peter: Jörg Frey, "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter," in *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, ed. Ruben Zimmermann, Jan G. van der Watt, and Susanne Luther, WUNT 2/296 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 275–310.

41 Nienhuis, p. 147.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

already in circulation,"[42] rather than as a "Second Jude." Accepting a late date for 2 Peter, Nienhuis goes on to speculate that the author of 2 Peter also knew the Johannine Epistles, and looks for evidence that the letter was composed in order to provide a (proto-)"canonical" link between 1 Peter and 1–3 Joh, as a "literary anchor" within the growing body of the Catholic Epistles. Pointing to various verbal links between 2 Peter and 1–3 John, as well as to substantial connections between the images of false teachers in these letters, and, finally, the common reference to eyewitness testimony in 2 Peter and 1 John, Nienhuis suggests that 2 Peter was written with 1–3 John in view, as a chain-lock or anchor between the writings now positioned around 2 Peter within the New Testament canon.

By linking 2 Peter to the canonical writings that precede and follow, i.e., 1 Peter and 1–3 John, rather than to the *Apocalypse of Peter* or Jude, Nienhuis provides a fresh perspective on the internal logic of the canonical sequence. He rightly states that 2 Peter does more than simply correcting a misguided eschatology. It actually provides a reorientation back to the apostolic or eyewitness tradition, although, it must be emphasized, that reference is fictional, and the doctrinal links to the historical figure of Peter are quite loose. The question remains, however, whether the common features of 2 Peter and 1 John are actually to be interpreted as deliberate references or rather as parts of a more common tendency (of referring to eyewitnesses, polemicizing against deviant teachers, etc.) in the late first or early second century. With regard to Nienhuis's suggestion that 2 Peter is a chain-link between 1 Peter and 1–3 John, it is uncertain whether we can assume that this was *intended* by the author of 2 Peter and that he therefore wrote with a particular awareness of canonicity. Is 2 Peter, as David Trobisch assumed,[43] a part of the final "redaction" of the New Testament canon? Can we really say that in this case "composition and canonization were of a piece"?[44] Should we not rather distinguish the claim of authority presented by a text or its author from the process of reception in which such a claim is accepted by certain readers, a regional church, or a wider circle? The lack of early attestation of 2 Peter (the letter is not clearly mentioned, let alone accepted as authoritative before Origen), rather suggests that the canonical acceptance of this writing and also its integration into the

42 Nienhuis, p. 149.

43 David Trobisch, *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*, NTOA 31 (Freiburg, CH; Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 136–46.

44 Nienhuis, p. 148.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

growing collection of Catholic Epistles was considerably later and part of a more complicated process.

In any case, Nienhuis's observations on the logic of the canonical collection is a valuable contribution to understanding the function of 2 Peter, although we may have to distinguish between its original function, related to 1 Peter and the Pauline collection (but also to Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter*) and its later function as part of the corpus of the Catholic Epistles and the New Testament.

g) Largely in agreement with my perspective is the response by *Jan Bremmer*, the Groningen classicist and historian of religion. He finds the argument that 2 Peter reacts to the *Apocalypse of Peter* largely convincing but points to the still debated issues of location and date of the two texts. Then, Bremmer focuses on the theme of martyrdom in the *Apocalypse of Peter* where the technical use of the term "martyr" is already present (albeit only mirrored through the secondary Ethiopic translation). If this is true, the *Apocalypse* is a very early, mostly neglected Christian martyr text, and it would deserve to be better integrated into the debate about the development of martyrdom concepts.

After a brief discussion of his view that the *Apocalypse of Peter* originates in Egypt,[45] not in Palestine (which does not completely preclude a reference to Bar Kochba as "False Messiah"), Bremmer turns to the date of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Here, he can point to valuable evidence with regard to a *terminus ante quem*, such as the reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in the second book of the *Sibylline Oracles* (Or. Sib. 2:194ff.), composed in the second half of the second century and the echoes in Lucian's *True Histories* and the *Epistula Apostolorum*. With regard to the *terminus post quem*, however, Bremmer's argument is less convincing. The reference to the development of the Christian *Naherwartung* is problematic, as there was no unilinear development, and an imminent expectation could occasionally come up in various situations and groups and never completely disappeared.[46] Bremmer's reference to the idiosyncratic post-Marcion dating of the canonical gospels by Markus Vinzent[47] cannot provide any further help in our case, as Vinzent's ideas have not been

45 Cf. already Jan N. Bremmer, "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, ed. Tobias Nicklas et al., JSJSup 143 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 305–22.

46 Cf. the major study by Kurt Erlemann, *Naherwartung und Parusieverzögerung im Neuen Testament: ein Beitrag zur Frage religiöser Zeiterfahrung*, TANZ 17 (Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1995), who draws on a much more flexible concept of time than earlier research, e.g. the influential study by Kurt Aland, which is quoted by Bremmer.

47 Markus Vinzent, *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014).

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

favorably received by New Testament scholars. Thus, the suggested date of the *Apocalypse of Peter* around 150 CE is still not sufficiently substantiated, and the argument, first adduced by Tobias Nicklas, that the link between the imminent expectation of the end and the martyrdom of Peter would only "work" within a limited time-span after Peter's death still deserves consideration.[48] I am also less confident that we can postulate that the famous vaticinium of Peter's martyrdom in Apoc. Pet. 14.4 ("And go into the city that rules over the west and drink the cup …") is simply a reworking of the different vaticinium of Peter's death in John 21:18–19, and Bremmer's qualification of his claim by the phrase "directly or indirectly"[49] reflects how uncertain this is. But if the *Apocalypse of Peter* provides a separate tradition of Peter's martyrdom in Rome, independent from the Gospel of John, this would indeed point to an earlier dating for at least this tradition and possibly also for the whole composition of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

h) It could be expected that the contribution by *Tobias Nicklas* would express fundamental agreement with the "new perspective" developed in my lectures, since it was the work of his doctoral student Wolfgang Grünstäudl[50] that convinced me of the literary dependence of 2 Peter on the *Apocalypse of Peter* and inspired me to develop my own interpretation of the writing based on the new insights gained from this. Nicklas's article on the Vienna fragment of the *Apocalypse of Peter* and the Greek version of the announcement of Peter's martyrdom[51] provided a further important cornerstone for my interpretation of 2 Peter as a reaction to views stimulated by the *Apocalypse of Peter* and its relatively naïve expectation of the end, which it closely related to the martyrdom of Peter. In his contribution to the present volume, Nicklas summarizes and systematizes his own views about the *Apocalypse of Peter* as an early testimony of Alexandrian Christianity and describes the theological milieu and the range of concepts that can be discovered through the "window" of this enigmatic text. In addition, Nicklas provides a comprehensive summary of the aspects of 2 Peter that can be better understood against the background of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. On this basis he confirms—also against the skeptical voices uttered in the present volume—that the "New Perspective on 2 Peter" suggested in my lectures and developed more thoroughly in my commentary can indeed help to better understand some of the enigmas and aporias of this

48 Cf. Nicklas, "Drink the Cup."
49 Bremmer, p. 85.
50 Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus*.
51 Nicklas, "Drink the Cup."

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

writing, and this is, in fact, what is needed to test and confirm an exegetical hypothesis.

Based on these insights, Nicklas proposes to widen the "Petrine discourse," i.e. the discourse established around the figure of Peter and in Pseudo-Petrine writings since the second century,[52] by including further Pseudo-Petrine writings, such as the Coptic *Apocalypse of Peter* from Nag Hammadi Codex VII. Although the literary relations are hard to substantiate, there is some evidence that this Gnostic text develops aspects present in 2 Peter, not only the centrality of the figure of Peter as the recipient of a special revelation of Jesus but also his connection with the discourse about "knowledge" (γνῶσις / ἐπίγνωσις) concerning God and Christ. Locating 2 Peter in Alexandria allows for a fresh interpretation of this text as part of a particular discourse about knowledge and insight, which contributed to the emergence of Gnostic ideas, or, at least, developed the figure of Peter into a "useful" figure for emerging Gnosticism. Thus, the concept of a "Petrine Discourse" (rather than the older pattern of a "Petrine School")[53] emerges as a fruitful basis for reconsidering the developments of early Christian and Gnostic thought in Alexandria and beyond.

Looking back at these eight substantial reactions to my lectures (and commentary), I can again only express my deep gratitude to the respondents for the amount and level of interaction with my ideas, and for their fair and sympathetic reading of my proposal, even if they ultimately ended up disagreeing with (some aspects of) it. I am well aware that my historical constructions and suggestions are hypothetical in character, and possibilities for proving them (including "literary dependence" of whatever type) are limited due to the fragmentary character and fluid textual status of the *Apocalypse of Peter*. On the other hand, scholarship should not underestimate the influence of that text, which was apparently very popular throughout the second century. The (supposedly cautious) conclusion that the two texts are "independent" may be intended to avoid making claims that cannot be proven, but if it is only the result of a methodological *ignoramus*, it remains an unsatisfactory outcome. More helpful is the pattern of a "discourse" to which several texts contribute, and within which they partially interact with each other, and such a discourse

52 See Frey, "Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'" and, for the terminological choice, the idea of a "Mosaic discourse," coined by Oxford scholar Hindy Najman in her reflections on the figure of Moses authorizing the Torah and various other writings related to the Torah in Ancient Judaism, see Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003).

53 Cf. Frey, "Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'".

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

around the figure of Peter seems to become particularly vivid in the mid-second century.

Despite attempts to critically question my interpretation, I do, with all due caution, remain committed to the "new perspective" on 2 Peter, which reads this text as a response to skeptical critics who shook their heads about all-too naïve eschatological expectations, and construes it as an educated apology for a certain type of Christian faith that drew on contemporary philosophical and cosmological ideas. I also welcome the challenge to further consider the lines of thought developed by some of my respondents, including the inner-canonical development and logic, as well as the relationship to tendencies of developing "knowledge" or even the relationship to emerging (proto-)Gnostic tendencies in Alexandria. 2 Peter and its literary and historical context has become a vivid and vibrant field of research, and much interpretive insight may yet be gained if the old-fashioned ways of earlier scholarship with its simplistic disputes about pseudepigraphy and one-sided denominational polemics[54] are finally left behind.

Bibliography

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1988): 3713–52.

Bauckham, Richard J. "2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 290–303. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1983.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba." In *The Fate of the Dead: Studies in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 160–258. NovTSup 93. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Apocalypse of Peter: An Account of Research." *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1988): 4712–50.

Bauckham, Richard J. "The Martyrdom of Peter in Early Christian Literature." *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 539–95.

Bremmer, Jan N. "Orphic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Tours of Hell: Observations on the Apocalypse of Peter." In *Other Worlds and Their Relation to This World: Early Jewish and Ancient Christian Traditions*, edited by Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, Erik Eynikel, and Florentino García Martínez, 305–22. JSJSup 143. Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2010.

54 Cf. Frey, "Hermeneutical Problems Posed by 2 Peter," 9–21.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Callan, Terrance. *Acknowledging the Divine Benefactor: The Second Letter of Peter*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014.

Erlemann, Kurt. *Naherwartung und Parusieverzögerung im Neuen Testament: ein Beitrag zur Frage religiöser Zeiterfahrung*. TANZ 17. Tübingen; Basel: Francke, 1995.

Foster, Paul. "Peter in Noncanonical Traditions." In *Peter in Early Christianity*, edited by Helen K. Bond and Larry W. Hurtado, 222–62. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015.

Foster, Paul. *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary*. TENT 4. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010.

Foster, Paul. "The Relationship between 2 Peter and Early Christian Pseudepigrapha." In *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, edited by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, 179–201. WUNT 397. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Frey, Jörg. "Autorfiktion und Gegnerbild im Judasbrief und im Zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen*, edited by Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Clare K. Rothschild, and Michaela Engelmann, 683–732. WUNT 246. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.

Frey, Jörg. "Between Holy Tradition and Christian Virtues? The Use of πίστις/πιστεύειν in Jude and 2 Peter." In *Glaube: Das Verständnis des Glaubens im frühen Christentum und in seiner jüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt*, edited by Jörg Frey, Benjamin Schliesser, and Nadine Ueberschaer, 609–40. WUNT 373. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Frey, Jörg. *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*. ThHK 15/II. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015.

Frey, Jörg. "Disparagement as Argument: The Polemical Use of Moral Language in Second Peter." In *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, edited by Ruben Zimmermann, Jan G. van der Watt, and Susanne Luther, 275–310. WUNT 2/296. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Frey, Jörg. "Fire and Water? Apocalyptic Imagination and Hellenistic Worldview in 2 Peter." In *Sibyls, Scriptures, and Scrolls: John Collins at Seventy*, edited by Joel Baden, Hindy Najman, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, 451–71. JSJSup 175. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016.

Frey, Jörg. "Hermeneutical Problems Posed by 2 Peter." In *Der Zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, edited by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, 9–36. WUNT 397. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Frey, Jörg. *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*. Translated by Kathleen Ess. Waco, Tex.: Baylor UP, 2018.

Frey, Jörg. "Von der ‚petrinischen Schule' zum ‚petrinischen Diskurs'." In *Petrusliteratur und Petrusarchäologie: Römische Begegnungen*, edited by Jörg Frey and Martin Wallraff. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Gilmour, Michael J. *The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Other Early Christian Literature*. Academia Biblica 10. Atlanta; Leiden: SBL; Brill, 2002.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. "Ein apokryphes Petrusbild im Neuen Testament. Zur Konstruktion apostolischer Autorität in OffbPetr und 2 Petr." In *Between Canonical and Apocryphal Texts: Processes of Rewriting, Reception and Interpretation in Early Judaism and Early Christianity*, edited by Claire Clivaz, Jörg Frey, and Tobias Nicklas, 289–308. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, forthcoming.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des Zweiten Petrusbriefes*. WUNT 2/315. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013.

Grünstäudl, Wolfgang. "Petrus, das Feuer und die Interpretation der Schrift: Beobachtungen zum Weltenbrandmotiv im zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Der eine Gott und die Völker in eschatologischer Perspektive: Studien zur Inklusion und Exklusion im biblischen Monotheismus*, edited by Luke Neubert and Michael Tilly, 183–208. BThS 137. Neukirchen; Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2013.

Horst, Pieter W. van der. "'The Elements Will Be Dissolved With Fire.' The Idea of Cosmic Conflagration in Hellenism, Ancient Judaism, and Early Christianity." In *Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity: Essays on Their Interaction*, 227–51. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994.

Kraus, Thomas J. "P.Vindob. G 2325: The So-Called Fayûm-Gospel: Re-Edition and Some Critical Conclusions." In Ad Fontes: *Original Manuscripts and Their Significance for Studying Early Christianity. Selected Essays*, 69–94. TENT 3. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007.

Kraus, Thomas J., and Tobias Nicklas. *Das Petrusevangelium und die Petrusapokalypse: Die griechischen Fragmente mit deutscher und englischer Übersetzung*. GCS NF 11, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 1. Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 2004.

Najman, Hindy. *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*. JSJSup 77. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Der geliebte Bruder': Zur Paulusrezeption im zweiten Petrusbrief." In *Der zweite Petrusbrief und das Neue Testament*, edited by Wolfgang Grünstäudl, Tobias Nicklas, and Uta Poplutz, 133–50. WUNT 397. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Nicklas, Tobias. "'Drink the Cup Which I Promised You' (Apoc. Pet. 14:4): The Death of Peter and the End of Times." In *The Open Mind: Essays in Honour of Christopher Rowland*, edited by Jonathan Knight and Kevin P. Sullivan, 183–200. LNTS 522. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2015.

Nicklas, Tobias. "Jewish, Christian, Greek? The Apocalypse of Peter as a Witness of Early Second Century Christianity in Alexandria." In *Beyond Conflicts: Cultural and Religious Cohabitations in Alexandria and Egypt between the 1st and the 6th Century CE*, edited by Luca Arcari, 27–46. STAC 103. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Parker, D.C. *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Ruf, Martin G. *Die heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief*. WUNT 2/300. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.

Trobisch, David. *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments: eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*. NTOA 31. Freiburg, CH; Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996.

Vinzent, Markus. *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels*. Leuven: Peeters, 2014.

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Index of Ancient Sources

Old Testament

Gen
- 1:1 180
- 1:5 165, 180, 181, 182, 185, 186
- 1:14 173, 180, 181, 182, 183
- 2:2–3 174
- 3 45
- 5:24 177
- 6:17 189
- 8:21–22 170, 183
- 8:22 174, 175, 180, 181, 182, 183
- 9:11 170

Ex
- 20:17 45
- 28:2 270

Deut
- 3:12 267
- 3:14 267
- 3:16 267
- 5:21 45
- 17:2 177
- 18:10 177
- 22:22 177
- 24:7 177

1 Sam
- 25:28 177

2 Sam
- 7:13 272

1 Kgs
- 1:52 177
- 28:27 40

2 Kgs
- 6:8–23 133

1 Chron
- 29:17 177

2 Chron
- 31:1 177

Esther
- 2:23 177

Job
- 34:19 174
- 37:22 270
- 40:5 270
- 40:10 270

Ps
- 2:6 244
- 2:6–7 269
- 3:4 244
- 8:3 174
- 8:5 270
- 8:6 269, 270
- 8:7–8 174
- 19:1 174
- 24 86
- 28:1 270
- 37:36 177
- 41:4^{LXX} 26
- 41:11^{LXX} 26
- 48:1 244
- 89:29–30 272
- 90:4 31, 185, 186
- 95 184
- 95:7 270
- 102:25 174
- 102:25–26 189
- 103:22 174
- 104:10–18 174
- 104:19–23 174
- 104:24–27 174
- 118:24 184
- 119:90 169
- 121:4 40
- 145:9–10 174
- 148:5–6 169

Ecc
- 1:4 169

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Isa
11:9 244
13:6–13 250
19:25 174
24:18 189
24:21 189
24:21–23 189
27:13 244
29:23 174
34:4 167, 271
35:9 177
40:9 244
42:5 176
43:19 41
54:9 170
56:7 244
57:13 244
60:19–20 181
60:21 174
65:11 244
65:17 31, 41, 163
65:25 244
65–66 39
66:1 168
66:20 244
66:22 31, 41, 163

Jer
5:27 40
17:15 26
50:20 177

Ezek
12:22 26
17:23 244
20:40 244
37 107
37:25 272
40:2 244

Dan
3:33 43
3:57–87 175
4:27 270
4:31 270
4:34 43
7:14 272
7:27 43, 272
11:19 177

Zeph
1:18 170
3:8 170
3:13 177

Zech
14 182
14:1 182
14:3 182
14:5 182
14:7 182
14:1–7 182
14:6–7 182

Mal
3:2 163

Jdt
10:18 27

1 Macc
1:11 162
14:21 270

2 Macc
8:12 27
15:12 27

Sirach
1:2 185
16:18 163
16:27 175
16:26–28 169, 175
18:10 185
33:14–15 175
42:15–43:33 175
42:17 175
42:24–25 175
44:18 170
50:23 185

Wis/Sap. Sal.
1:4 169
5 103
8:7 56
12.24 86
15.18 86
19:6 171
19:18–21 171

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Pseudepigrapha

Let. Arist.
138 86

2 Bar.
13:1 270
21:19–25 208
22:1 270
32:6 41
44:12 41

4 Ez.
5:33 276
7:28 43, 272
7:30–31 41
7:39–43 183
8:47 276

1 En.
1.6 175
2.2 175
2.1–2 174
2.3 174
2.3–5.3 174
2–5 174, 175
5.2 174
5.2–3 175
5.3 174
10.22 170
13.8 270
65.4 270
83 189
83.1–5 189
83.3 189
91.16 41
93.4 189

1 Esd.
4:36 174

Asc. Isa.
4.2–3 274
5.13 84

Jub.
1:29 41
2:16 175
2:26–29 175
4:26 41

3 Macc.
3:17 27

Odes Sol.
16.13 175

Pss. Sol.
14:9 177
17:35 272

Qumran

1QHa
3:29–36 251
11:26–36 287
12:21 177
19:29 177

1QS
10:22–23 177

4Q171
frag. 1, col. II, ll.6–9 177

4Q319 181

4Q320 181

4Q392
frag. 1:5–6 190

4Q434
frag. 2:2–3 176

Early Jewish Literature

Mek.
Ex 20:2 170

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

b. Zeb.
116a 170

Gen. Rab.
3.9 180
49.9 170

Josephus
Ag. Ap.
1.232 46

Ant.
1.14 135
1.14–26 129, 132, 133, 134, 135
1.20 136
1.23 136
1.29 180
1.70 189, 271
1.74 129
2.10 144
4.109 129
4.177 135
4.177–93 129, 131, 132, 133
4.309–19 132
4.316 267
4.318 132
9.51–59 133
9.58 135
11.280 129, 134
17.130 48
18.19 177

J.W.
22–23 (*pref.*) 48
3.475 129, 134

Philo
Abr.
144 46

Aet.
10 166
19 181
20 168
40–41 168
43 167
76–77 168
85 168
106 166

Contempl.
8 86

Decal.
76–80 86

Deus.
31–32 186

Leg.
2.14 48
2.64 56

Legat.
139 86
163 86

Mos.
2.65 189
2.266–67 171

Opif.
15–16 180
35 180

Ps.-Philo
L.A.B.
3.9 170
3.10 41
44.5 86

Sib. Or.
1.193–95 189
1.194 189
1.317–18 170
2 165, 172, 173, 191, 192
2.149–219 270
2.194ff. 299
2.194–219 18, 37
2.194–338 191
2.196–213 165, 172, 292
2.201–2 167
2.203 167
2.206 175

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2.208–13 173
2.325–29 165, 182
2.326 182
2.330–38 161, 182, 191, 192
2.335–38 82
3.30–1 86
3.80–81 175
3.80–92 18, 37, 182, 270
3.84–7 251
3.88–90 183
4.171–89 18, 37, 271
4.172–80 251
5.206–13 104
5.209–13 18, 37
5.209–21 271
5.212 41
8.217–50 164
8.325–29 182
8.337 175
8.424–27 182

T. Jud.
22.2 163

T. Levi
1.2 267

T. Mos.
2.7 86
10.12 163
10.14 163

2 Bar.
21:19–25 208
29–30 272
49:2 184

3 Bar.
10:2 82

2 En.
23.1–2 183
32.1 163
33.1–2 183
34.3 189
65.7 183

New Testament

Matt
3:17 270
5:10 268, 270
5:20 42, 272
5:28 45
7:15 151
7:15–16 152
7:21 42, 272
13:41 271
15:19 79
16:17–19 118
16–17 107
16:18 162
16:28 271
17:1 268
17:5 241, 242, 268, 270
18:3 42, 272
18:8–9 42
19:17 42
19:23 272
20:22–23 84
22:14 80
23:13 42
24:11 151, 152
24:14 162
24:24 151, 152
24:27 27
24:37 27
24:39 27
24:40–41 182
24:43–44 31
26:39 84
26:42 84
26:44 84
26:69–75 119
27 233

Mark
1:11 270
1:15 25
9:2 243, 268
9:7 241, 268, 270
9:43 42
9:45 42
9:47 42
10:15 42

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Mark (cont.)
10:23–25 42, 272
13:22 151
13:30 206
14:25 25
14:36 84
14:39 84
24:37 182

Luke
1:2 154
1:33 271, 272
3:22 270
6:26 151
7:45 162
9:28 243, 268
9:31 132
9:34–35 270
9:35 241, 268
9:43 133, 244
12:39–40 31
17:27 182
17:28 182
17:35 182
18:17 272
18:24–25 272
22:29–30 271
22:42 84
23:42 271
23:43 272

John
1:1–2 154
3:3 43
3:5 42, 43, 272
5:24 51, 57
11:25 51, 57
12:34 272
13:36 265
14:15 155
15:27 154
16:4–5 154
18:36–37 43, 271
21:15 162
21:18 107, 265, 286, 287
21:18–19 19, 20, 85, 248, 290, 300
21:23–24 274

Acts
1:13–3:1 154
1:21–22 154
3:3 154
4:1 154
4:13 154
4:19 154, 156
7:59 81
8:14 154
8:17 154
8:25 154
9:26–30 219
11:30 219
12:25 219
14:22 42, 272
15 219
15:14 214
18:9–10 162
20 199
24:11 162

Rom
2:4 63
2:5–9 58
2:7 244, 270
2:10 270
5:1 51
6:8 57
7:7 45
7:10 142
8:20–21 47
8:21 47
8:37–38 58
8:38–39 12
12:1–2 58
13:9 45

1 Cor
1:9 53
4:2 35
4:8 138
5:1 138
6:3 12
6:15 138
7:31 168
8:1 51
10:29 47

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

13:8–12 185
15:12 138
15:23–28 43, 272
15:24 12
15:24–25 271
15:27–28 270
15:51–52 25

2 Cor
1:18 53
3:17 47
8:7 55

Gal
1:1 157
1:12 157
2:2 157
2:4 47
2:7 35
2:9 157
2:11–16 64
3:9 35
5:1 47
5:13 47
5:22–23 55, 58
6:2 58

Eph
1:17 54
4:2 46
4:13 54
4:22 45
5:5 43

Phil
4:8 56

Col
1:10 54
1:13 43, 271
1:16 12
2:10–11 12
2:15–18 12
3:8 79

1 Thess
1:2–3 52
1:3 55
3:8 79
3:13 27
4:15 25, 27
4:15–17 161
4:17 25
5:2 31
5:23 27

2 Thes
2:6–7 163

1 Tim
1:7 157
1:17 244, 270
2:4 54
5:8 152
6:11 55
6:15 272
6:20 55, 297

2 Tim
2:12 152
2:13 152
2:22 55
2:25 54
3:5 152
3:7 54
3:10 55
4:1 43, 271
4:3 157
4:18 43, 271

Tit
1:1 54
1:4 54
1:16 152
2:12 152

Philm
6 54

Heb
1:6–9 270
1:8 43, 271, 272
2:7 244
3 184
10:26 54
11:24 152

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Jas
2 265
2:14–16 58
2:21–24 51
3:1 157
4:8 29
5:7–8 27

1 Pet
1:1 149
1:2 15, 149
1:7 270
1:10–12 149
1:19 149
2:4–10 39
2:9 39
2:16 149
2:21 153
3:19–20 149
3:20 149
4:11 110, 149
4:12–19 142
5:1 15, 153
5:12 149
5:13 110

2 Pet
1 40, 288
1:1 9, 52, 53, 108, 201, 203, 214
1:2 12, 15, 48, 52, 54, 110, 111, 149
1:2–3 52
1:2–3:8 111
1:3 46, 47, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 57, 61, 190
1:3–4 48, 49, 134, 135, 248
1:3–11 40, 48, 49, 60, 199, 203, 248, 292
1:4 40, 42, 43, 44, 57, 186, 187, 190, 292
1:4–15 236, 273
1:5 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 57
1:5–6 52, 55, 111
1:5–7 47, 50, 55, 190, 248
1:5–8 111
1:5–11 45, 48
1:6–7 52
1:8 51, 52, 57, 61
1:9 59, 109
1:10 57, 149, 200
1:11 18, 19, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 57, 61, 109, 185, 200, 271, 272, 273
1:12 151, 198
1:12–15 13, 108, 131, 133, 198, 199, 203
1:12–18 273
1:12–21 108
1:13 266
1:13–14 19, 246, 247, 248
1:13–15 2
1:14 20, 55, 109, 201, 248, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 286, 290, 292
1:14–15 108
1:14–26 129, 135
1:15 14, 18, 108, 132
1:16 27, 38, 111, 135, 153, 203, 212, 243
1:16–17 18, 240, 241
1:16–18 2, 9, 15, 132, 133, 135, 199, 203, 236, 239, 256, 269, 273, 290
1:17 19, 38, 201, 241, 242, 268, 269, 289
1:17–18 109
1:18 153, 201, 203, 223, 242, 244, 268, 269
1:19 38, 39, 63, 129, 134, 162, 184, 185
1:19–21 205
1:20 110, 111
1:20–21 110, 142, 149
1:21 39
1:21–2:1 223
2 288
2:1 40, 47, 115, 141, 151, 152, 153, 188, 193, 199, 204, 206, 212, 252
2:1–3 109
2:1–18 273
2:1–21 24, 203
2:1–3:3 11, 14, 143
2:2 18, 200, 201, 204, 205
2:3 40, 152, 153, 188, 193

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2:3–11 45
2:4 12, 40, 149, 155, 185, 193, 201
2:4–8 136
2:4–10 111
2:5 84, 129, 149, 188, 190
2:5–11 45
2:6 40, 185, 193
2:9 40, 48, 56, 57, 155, 188, 193
2:9–10 135, 136
2:10 61, 129
2:10–12 109
2:11 60
2:11–13 274
2:12 40, 109, 171, 186, 187, 193
2:13 149, 205
2:14 201, 205
2:15 18, 152, 153, 200
2:16 129, 205
2:16–18 134, 268
2:17 40, 155, 185, 193
2:18 45, 48, 152
2:19 47, 52, 59, 149, 186, 205
2:19–22 206
2:20 52, 54, 55, 111, 193
2:21 18, 40, 55, 111, 153, 200
2:22 142
3 8, 27, 29, 30, 31, 39, 44, 62, 160, 162, 164, 165, 174, 185, 187, 222, 271, 288, 291, 294, 296
3:1 14, 63, 66, 109, 110, 143, 148, 153, 176, 198, 203
3:1–2 149, 153, 205
3:1–3 273
3:2 110, 149, 157, 203, 213
3:3 24, 111, 199, 205, 252
3:3–4 24, 153, 288
3:3–11 8
3:3–13 2, 203
3:4 4, 12, 20, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 39, 66, 154, 160, 162, 163, 164, 166, 169, 170, 175, 181, 186, 205, 206, 207, 208, 221, 222, 237, 252, 274, 275, 291, 292, 295
3:4–13 4, 160
3:5 27, 187, 188, 201
3:5–7 20, 31, 35, 154, 164, 190, 250
3:5–10 205
3:5–12 28, 273, 287
3:5–13 4, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28, 30, 36, 38, 66, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 186, 199, 291, 292
3:6 31, 149, 189, 190, 276
3:6–7 189, 271
3:7 20, 27, 31, 32, 155, 171, 188, 190, 193, 201, 249, 250, 251, 270, 292
3:8 62, 165, 180, 186, 223
3:8–9 164
3:8–10 28, 31
3:9 25, 37, 63, 164, 188, 193
3:10 4, 20, 31, 32, 34, 35, 165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 177, 178, 188, 189, 201, 214, 249, 250, 251, 270, 289, 292, 293, 295
3:10–12 4, 171, 189, 190
3:10–13 164, 172, 175, 250
3:11 52, 164, 188, 190
3:12 20, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 165, 171, 172, 185, 188, 201, 249, 250, 251, 270, 271, 292
3:12–13 165
3:13 31, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 163, 165, 172, 187, 223, 291, 292
3:14 35, 46, 58, 60, 62, 149, 190, 265
3:14–15 265
3:15 14, 62, 188, 198, 204, 205, 264, 286
3:15–16 3, 8, 47, 62, 65, 110, 142, 143, 151
3:15–18 149
3:16 55, 59, 110, 188, 193, 203, 205, 221
3:17 46, 47, 53, 58, 60, 111, 152, 155
3:18 52, 55, 60, 110, 111, 149, 165, 185

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

1 John
1:1 154
1:1–3 153, 156
1:4 154
1:6 153
1:7 153
1:8 152
2:3–5 155
2:6 153
2:11 153
2:17 45
2:22 152
2:22–23 152
2:26 152
2:27 152
3:7 152
3:22–24 155
4:1 151
4:6 152
5:1–12 157
5:3 155
5:4 157
5:18 155
5:21 155

2 John
4 153
6 153
7 152
9–10 152

3 John
3 153
4 153

Jude
1 59
3 206
3–4 39
3–19 185, 192
4 59, 157, 206, 212
5–7 39
6 12, 155, 185, 193
7 185, 193
8–10 11
9 12
11 200
13 155, 185, 193
14–15 12
17 212, 213
18 26
21 155
24 53, 60, 155

Rev
2:13 152
2:19 55
3:8 152
4:9 270
4:11 270
5:12 270
5:13 270
6:9–11 163
10:4 270
10:8 270
11:18 272
12:8 177
12:17 155
13:11–18 152
14:13 270
16:13 152
16:14–15 171
16:20 177
17:14 80
18:14 177
18:21 177
19:20 152
20:1–6 43, 272
20:9 250
20:10 152
20:11 41
20:21 177
21:1 41
21:23–25 181
21:26 244, 270
22:3 272

Apostolic Fathers

Barn.
7:11 271
19:8 46

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Herm.
Sim.
5.5.3 163
6.1.4 56
8.10.1 56
9.12.3–8 42, 272
9.16.2–4 42, 272

Mand.
1.1.2 56
12.3.1 56

Vis.
2.3.4 29

Ignatius
Phld.
9:2 27

Rom.
4:3 63

Justin
1 Apol.
20.1–2 37, 271
10.1–4 170
25 144
48.2 27
54.7 27
60.8 37, 271
60.8–10 170

2 Apol.
6(7) 170
7.2–3 271

Dial.
32.1 272
34.2 272
39.7 272
46 185
46.1 272
76.1 272
81.1 223
81.1–3 223
81.3 223
82.1–3 223
88.2 27
116 185
116.2 272
120.5 272
123.9 150
140.2 272

Mart. Pol.
14.2 84

Polycarp
Phil.
2.1 253
7.1 150

1 Clem
5:3–7 63
9:4 189
11:2 29
23:3 28, 29, 206
50:3 271

2 Clem
1:1 61
1:2 61, 62
1:3 57, 61
1:4 61, 62
1:5 61
1:6 61
1:7 61
1:8 61
2:1 61
2:7 61
3:1 61
3:2–3 61
3:4 61
4:3 61
5:1 61
5:5 61
5:6 61
7:4 61
6:9 42, 61, 272
8:2 61
9:1 61
9:5 61
9:7 61
10:1 56
11:1 61
11:1–3 274

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

2 Clem (cont.)
11:2 28, 206
11:7 42, 272
12:1 61
12:1–2 164
12:2 271
13:1 61
14:1 61
15:2 61
16:1–17:1 61
16:3 37, 170, 251, 271, 293
17:4 61, 164

New Testament Apocryphal Literature and Nag Hammadi Texts

Acts of Pet.
20 243

Apoc. Mos.
37.3 83

Apoc. Pet. (Greek/Ethiopic)
1–2 17
1:6 106
2 77, 78, 109, 163
2:1 163
2:7–9 87
2:10 77, 87
2:11 77, 87, 163
2:13 77
3 17
3:1 106
3:7 106
4 17, 249
4:1 33, 106, 109, 171, 172, 201
4:2 171, 208
4:4 201
4:5 166, 171
4:7 106, 166
4:9 104, 171
4:12–13 171
4:13 166, 168, 188
4:14 160, 161
4–5 21, 164, 165, 166, 169, 170, 172, 292
4–6 19, 20, 33, 171, 172, 292
4–11 245
5 17, 18, 109, 167, 250, 271, 293
5–6 249, 250
5:1 171
5:1–2 172, 292
5:1–8 270
5:2–4 201
5:2–6 33
5:4 250, 251, 271
5:4–5 167
5:6 172, 250, 251, 271
5:7 172
5:8 33
5:9 33, 167
6 17, 30, 171, 292
6:1 34
6:2 87
6:2–6 34
6:3 214
6:7 104, 106
6:7–9 87
7:1–10:7 191
7–13 17
7:2 200
7:5–6 201
8 18, 103
9:2 78
9:2–3 78
9:4 79
10 87
10:2 106
10:5 106
10:6–7 192
12 18
12:5 104
13 80
13:3 104
13:5 104
13–14 184
14 17, 18, 19, 236, 246
14:1 104, 200
14:1–2 83, 191, 192
14:1–3 161, 191, 192, 248
14:1–4 19, 273
14:1–5 161

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

14:2 107, 108, 109, 182, 185, 200, 208, 271, 272, 273
14:3 107, 201
14:3–4 246
14:4 4, 17, 19, 25, 30, 42, 43, 83, 86, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 161, 162, 163, 201, 265, 267, 268, 274, 275, 276, 286, 287, 290, 291, 300
14:5 161, 267
14:6 161, 275, 276
15 81
15:1 201, 268, 269
15:1–16:1 268
15–16 17
15:1–17:1 268, 287
15–17 18, 19, 38, 199, 236, 239, 240, 241, 245, 273
16:1 201, 208
16:1–6 268
16:4 201, 208
16:5 19, 268, 269, 270
16:6 268
16:7–9 268
16:9 269
17 17, 109
17:1 201, 268, 269
17:2 270
17:3 109

Apoc. Pet. (Akhmim fragment)
3 163
4–20 199, 236
13–14 184
22 18, 200, 201
22–34 191
27 78
28 18, 79, 200, 201
33 86, 87
33–34 192
34 200

Apoc. Pet. (Coptic Apocalypse from Nag Hammadi)
VII.71.6–9 142
VII.71.15–72.3 118
VII.73.10–81.3 139
VII.74.9 141
VII.74.10–25 118
VII.75.21–22 139
VII.76.18–23 139
VII.78.6 139
VII.78.23–24 139
VII.79.17 139
VII.79.31 114
VII.80.15–16 139
VII.81.3–83.15 141
VII.81.15–24 116
VII.82.31–83.6 117

APTheclae
29 81

KerygPet. 3, 22–23, 27, 66, 88, 101, 113–14, 185
Frg. 9 27

Early Church Authors And Texts

Acts of Cyprian
2^1.1 82
2^2.1 82

Acts of Justin
A1 82
A6 82

Aristides
Apol.
16.1 185

Athenagoras
Res.
2.5.3–4 171

Augustine
Civ.
20.24 169, 189

Clement of Alexandria
Ecl.
41–65 105
48–49 104
58 23

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Protr.
9.84.6 184

Strom.
1.(21.)147.2–4 144
1.182.3 23
2.(8.)36.1 141
2.68.2 23
4.(12.)81.2–83.2 141, 142
4.(12.)86.1 141
5.121–22 37
6.5.39 23
6.15.128 27
6.39.4–40.2 23
6.41.2–3 23
6.58.1 23
7.(17.)106.4 112, 120, 142, 143
7.108.1 120

Quis Div. Salv.
36.3 188

Cyprian
Ep.
3.2 81
15.1.2 81
20.1 81
21.2.1 81
23 82
27.1.1 81
36.2 82
36.3 82

Didasc. apost.
26 185

Ep. Apost.
39 271

Epiphanius
Pan.
24.5.2 142
31.2.2–3 112

Ep. Diog.
10.1 54
10.2–3 150
11.4 150

Eusebius of Caesarea
Comm. Isa.
Isa 2:18–21 184
Isa 58:8 184

Cron. Abr.
2148 112

De Sol. Pasch.
PG 24.697 184

Dem. ev.
9.18.7 184

Hist. eccl.
2.16.5 121
2.17.2 121
3.39.15 121
3.39.16 150
4.7.3 112
5.1.45 81
5.2.5 81
5.18.6–7 81
6.13.12 105
6.14.1 13
6.5.6 81
6.25.8 13
6.41.18 82

In Isa.
2.7 167

Irenaeus
Haer.
1.24.1 112
1.24.3 140
1.24.4 116, 140, 141
1.24.5 140, 141, 142

Fragm.
ANF 1.573 144

Hippolytus
Haer.
7.20.1 120, 142
7.26.1–2 141

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Fragm.
ANF 5.177 144

Jerome
Ep.
120.11 15

Vir.
3.1 15

Lactantius
De mor. Persec.
2.5–8 161
77.2.5–8 276

Macarius Magnes
Apocrit.
3.22.3 162
4.1.2–2.1 168
4.1.3 166
4.2.5 161
4.3.1 162
4.4.1 162
4.4.2 162
4.4.3 162
4.6.1 168
4.6.2 168
4.6.3–4 166
4.7.1 167, 168
4.7.2 167, 168
4.8.1 168
4.24.a.5 166

Melito
Pasch.
476 272

Minucius Felix
Oct.
11.1–2 169
11.1–3 271
33 144
34.1–5 170

Origen
Cels.
1.16 144
1.47 144
4.11 144, 169
4.13 169
4.20 170
4.64 84
5.14 167, 169
5.15 170
5.20 168, 170
6.58 190

Comm. Gen.
Gen 1:5 181

Comm. Mat.
10.17 144

Comm. Jo.
5.3 13

Comm. Rom.
PG 14:1015 142

Hom. in Jer.
Jer. 17:6 184

Pass. Perpet.
1.6 82
7–8 81
16.1 82

Ps.-Clem.
Ep. Clem.
11.2 185

Ps.-Hip.
Cons. Mund.
37 177

Tatian
Or. Graec.
6.1 170
25.2 170, 271
25.6 37

Tertullian
Apol.
19 144

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Ad Mar.
1.6 81

De fuga
5.3 82

De paen.
9.4 81

De pud.
22 81

Nat.
1.18.10 85

Scor.
10.8 81

Spect.
30 37

Theophilus
Autol.
2.37–38 170
2.38 271
3.23 144

Non-Christian Ancient Literature

Aristotle
Cael.
1.10 187
2.1 180

Phys.
4.10–14 179
8.1 179, 180

Cicero
Nat. d.
2.85 168
2.118 36, 168

Cons. Marc.
26.6 84

Diogenes Laertius
Vit.
10.73 187

Juvenal
Sat.
8.235 85

Lucretius
Rer.
5.90–109 187
5.97–98 169
5.235–32 187
5.235–415 187
5.351–79 187
5.380–415 187
5.392–415 36
5.411–415 36

Martial
Epig.
4.86.8 85
10.25.5 85
10.86.8 85

Plato
Crit.
120d–121 46

Phd.
69e 80
113e–114b 81

Tim.
22 170
22c 36, 84
22d 190
37c–38b 186
38b 178
38c 178
41b 167

Plutarch
Mor.
1075B–C 170

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Seneca
Cons. Marc.
26.6 187

Ep.
14.5 85

Nat.
3.27–30 84
3.29.4–5 187
3.29.5–30.8 187
3.30.5 187

Sextus Empiricus
Adv. Math.
10:188 180

Ps.-Soph.
fr.2 176

Stobaeus
Ecl.
1.8.40b 179

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Index of Modern Authors

Abbott, Edwin A. 8, 9n5, 67n191, 128–35, 196n3, 217n2
Adams, Edward 27n85, 28n91, 32n95, 35, 37n106, 41n112, 137n34, 163n9, 176n59
Aland, Kurt 87n56
Allison, Dale C., Jr. 59n176
Ameling, Walter 79n13
Armstrong, Jonathan J. 184n96
Attridge, Harold W. 176n58, 271n42
Aune, David E. 26n81
Avemarie, Friedrich 59n176

Bühler, Winfried 80n18
Backhaus, K. 99n2
Barbu, Daniel 87n54
Barclay, John M.G. 79n12
Barnes, Timothy D. 19n61, 85n40
Bauckham, Richard J. 1, 5, 6, 10, 13, 15, 16n40, 17n48, 18–20, 28–29, 45n126, 65n189, 77, 81, 85, 86n46, 99n3, 103n18, 105, 107n38, 128n5, 130, 132n20, 137–38, 151n10, 157n23, 161n4, 191n121, 192n127, 192n128, 200–201, 203, 207, 211n44, 214, 222–23, 225, 234–39, 242, 244–46, 254n124, 256, 261n1, 262n8, 263n18, 263n19, 265n26, 266n29, 267n31, 268n33, 268n34, 268n35, 269n36, 269n38, 269n39, 272n43, 273n50, 274n52, 274n54, 276n60, 277n62, 278n69, 284–89, 291, 294–95
Baumeister, Th. 115n67
Bausi, Alessandro 78, 80n17, 83, 92n78
Berger, K. 115n67
Bigg, Charles 136n26, 209n37, 220–21, 253n123
Blumenthal, Christian 11n20, 32n96, 178n65, 178n66
Bockmuehl, Markus 196n2, 262n7
Boobyer, G.H. 149n5
Boer, Martinus C. de 219n10
Bouriant, U. 225
Bremmer, Jan N. 2, 17n49, 18n52, 39n108, 75n2, 81n22, 82n26, 84n39, 86n44, 86n45, 87n51, 89n64, 89n65, 104, 211, 278n70, 284n8, 299, 300
Broek, R. van den 120n85
Brox, Norbert 116n69
Bruce, F.F. 219n7
Buchholz, Dennis 16n41, 16n44, 18, 33n98, 34n99, 80n17, 83, 105, 160n1, 161n3, 167n22, 169n30, 191n121, 191n123, 192n127, 199n9, 208n34, 211n49, 234–35, 241, 250, 267n31
Bühler, Winfried 80n18
Burchard, Christoph 59n175
Burkert, Walter 84n36

Callan, Terrance 3, 50n143, 51n145, 52n149, 56n162, 58n174, 134n24, 143n53, 284n9, 296–97
Cambe, Michel 22n69, 114n62
Campagnano, A. 120n85
Caulley, Thomas Scott 137n32, 137n33
Chaine, Joseph 84n38
Charles, J. Daryl 50n143, 56n167
Charles, R.H. 253n121
Chase, F.H. 231–32
Collins, Adela Yarbro 220n12
Collins, John J. 18n53, 37n106, 84n38, 173n47
Conzelmann, Hans 99n1
Cook, John Granger 85n40, 167n22
Copeland, Kirsti B. 192n127
Crook, Zebra 79n12
Crossley, James G. 220n11
Culpepper, R. Alan 99n1

Danker, Frederick W. 35n103, 49, 50n143, 199n6
Dassmann, Ernst 81n21
Davids, Peter H. 11n18, 111n50, 137n33, 151n10, 222–23, 237–38
Delling, G. 171n44, 190n20
Desjardins, Michel 140n45
Dieterich, Albrecht 104n25, 211
Dochhorn, Jan 83n31
Donelson, Lewis R. 137n33, 223
Downing, F. Gerald 186n104
Dschulnigg, P. 10n14
Dubois, Jean-Daniel 114n64, 115–19
Dulk, Matthijs den 7n1, 92n78, 285
Dunn, James D.G. 219n9

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Edwards, M.J. 161n5, 161n6
Elliott, John H. 15n39
Ellis, E. Earle 28n91
Erlemann, Kurt 26n82, 299n46

Faessler, Franz 82n24
Farkasfalvy, Denis 148n3, 149n5
Farrar, F.W. 128, 130
Fillion, L. 128n4, 130
Fischel, Henry A. 55n161
Fornberg, Tord 136, 138, 197n4
Foster, Paul 5, 119n83, 244n106, 245n109, 256n129, 284n7, 289–91
Frankfurter, David 105n30
Frey, Jörg *passim*
Fuchs, Eric 209n38
Fürst, Alfons 102, 112n53, 112n54, 119n82, 120

García Martínez, Florentino 181
Gerdmar, Anders 261n5
Gilmour, Michael J. 261n5, 262–63, 277, 286n13
Goppelt, Leonhard 99n3
Goulet, Richard 167n22
Grässer, Erich 26n81
Grünstäudl, Wolfgang 1, 2, 8, 13n30, 16, 19n56, 19n59, 19n60, 20n65, 21n67, 22, 24n76, 32n97, 37, 52n148, 58n173, 65n189, 75n1, 75n4, 77, 88, 91n175, 100n6, 101, 102n12, 105n28, 105n29, 108n41, 109n42, 110n47, 112n51, 113, 115, 198n5, 199n8, 202–3, 209, 210, 213n52, 213n53, 214, 218, 223–25, 239, 243–44, 254, 261n2, 283, 286, 289n19, 293, 300n50
Green, Gene L. 137, 238, 248n112
Green, Michael 137–38
Grundmann, Walter 136n27
Guidoboni, Emanuela 90n71

Hahn, Ferdinand 10n13
Harnack, Adolf von 76, 80n15, 226n42, 227–28, 234, 289
Harrington, Daniel J. 138, 222
Harvey, Robert 138n37
Healy, Mary 157n23
Henning, Meghan 81n19, 92n78
Henten, J.W. van 76
Herrmann, A. 90n71
Herzer, Jens 100n5
Hill, Charles E. 89n69
Hills, Julian V. 90n72, 270n40
Hollmann, G. 228n50
Hooker, Morna D. 220n14
Hoppe, R. 11n20
Horn, F.W. 100n3
Horst, Pieter W. van der 36n105, 37, 84n38, 210n43, 287n17
Hurtado, Larry W. 79n12

Jakab, Attila 16n41, 88n57, 89n68, 102n14, 104, 278n71
James, M.R. 128n4, 161n3, 167n21, 173, 191, 226–27, 229–30, 235, 236n84, 289
Jefford, Clayton N. 253n122
Jones, C.P. 89n67, 90n73
Joosten, Jan 86n50
Joubert, Stephan 51n144
Jülicher, Adolf 228n50

Käsemann, Ernst 9–10, 26n83, 28n90, 44n122, 44n123, 44n124, 58n171, 62n183, 136n27
Kelhoffer, James A. 52n148, 56–57, 60n179, 61n180, 61n181, 61n182
Kelly, J.N.D. 136n27, 221–22, 264n20
Klauck, Hans-Josef 204, 209
Kloppenborg, John S. 220n13
Knoch, Otto 99n3, 138n37
Knopf, Rudolf 213n52, 224, 228n50
Koester, Helmut 44n152
Konradt, Matthias 59n175
Konstan, David 179n69, 179n72
Kraus, Thomas J. 2n3, 12n24, 16n41, 17n45, 18, 42n117, 48n35, 53n154, 60n178, 77, 80n16, 81n21, 83n31, 91, 102n15, 104n23, 111n49, 119n83, 160n1, 167n22, 196n2, 199n9, 247n111, 261n2, 262n10, 263n15, 263n16, 263n19, 266n28, 283
Kugel, James 190n119
Kulik, Alexander 82n27

Lanzilotta, Lautaro Roig 192n127
Lapham, Fred 196n2
Layton, Bentley 140n46, 141n51
Lieu, Judith 150n6, 151n10, 152n13
Lightfoot, J.B. 207n29, 219n8

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Lightfoot, J.L. 75n4, 77–79, 80n16, 81–82, 83n29, 84n38, 88, 91, 182n85, 191, 192n127, 271n41
Lintott, A.W. 80n15
Lo Cascio, Elio 90n73
Lods, A. 226n41
Löhr, Winrich A. 112n52, 112n53, 120n87, 121n88
Long, A. A 179n71, 179n72, 190n20
Longenecker, Richard N. 219n7
Lorenzo Molinari, A. 117n76

Mansfeld, Jaap 84n38, 168n26
Marrassini, Paolo 77n8, 78n9, 83, 262n8, 267n31
Mayor, Joseph B. 128n4, 130, 134, 177n64, 221, 232–33, 254n124
Méhat, André 141n49
Merkt, Andreas 13n31
Miller, Ed L. 154n18
Miller, Robert J. 14n34, 19n59
Minnen, Peter van 16n43, 86, 192n127, 211, 226n15, 226n17
Möllendorf, Peter von 89n66
Morgan, Teresa 53n152
Moss, Candida 76, 87n55
Müller, C.D.G. 77n8, 192n127
Müller, Peter 12n21
Mutschler, Bernhard 53n151

Najman, Hindy 22n68, 100n8, 301n52
Neyrey, Jerome H. 40n11, 136–38, 151n10, 210n42, 254n124
Nickelsburg, G.W.E. 189n116
Nicklas, Tobias 2–3, 7, 16n41, 17n46, 18, 20n62, 20n63, 39n108, 42n117, 58n173, 75, 77, 79, 80n16, 81n19, 83n29, 84n35, 85–87, 89n65, 91n74, 92n77, 92n78, 100n8, 101, 102n15, 103n19, 104n26, 106n34, 106n35, 106n36, 107n37, 107n39, 110n44, 110n47, 111n50, 115n67, 115n67, 118n77, 119n82, 119n84, 160n1, 167n22, 199n9, 247n111, 263n15, 263n16, 274n55, 275, 283–84, 288n18, 296, 300–1
Niebuhr, Karl-Wilhelm 59n175, 148n1
Nienhuis, David R. 3, 147n1, 148n1, 149n5, 284n9, 279–99
Nogalski, James 150
Norden, Eduard 76
Norelli, Enrico 77, 85–86

Painter, John 150n7, 151n10
Parker, D.C. 32n97, 293n29
Paulsen, Henning 12n21, 22n69, 137
Pearson, Birger A. 114, 116, 117n76, 128n113, 139, 140n45, 141
Peel, Malcolm 138
Perkins, Pheme 137n33
Petraccia Lucernoni, M.F. 80n15
Pétrement, Simone 138n39
Pines, S. 183n88
Pouderon, Bernard 102n14
Prümm, K. 236, 256
Pratscher, W. 115n67

Ramelli, Ilaria 179n69, 192n127
Rebenich, Stefan 80n15
Reed, Annette Yoshiko 183n91
Reis, David M. 155n20
Reymond, Pierre 209n38
Rivière, Yann 80n15
Robinson, J.A. 233n71
Roessli, J.-M. 76n6
Rosenstiehl, J.-M. 103n17, 104n24
Rowston, Douglas J. 197n4
Rudolph, Kurt 139n44
Ruf, Martin G. 4, 14, 19n59, 42n116, 46n128, 46n129, 46n130, 47n133, 48n134, 49n139, 49n140, 50n143, 55n161, 64n186, 198n5, 200n11, 205n24, 207n29, 208n33, 261n2, 264n22, 266n30, 272n44, 277n65, 284n9, 286, 294–96
Ruiten, J. van 86n49, 103n16
Runia, David T. 180n78
Rutledge, Steven H. 80n15

Salmon, George 128n4, 130, 132–33
Sanday, W. 227–29, 232–33
Sandelin, Karl-Gustav 87n54
Schelkle, K.H. 10n4, 136n27
Schlosser, Jacques 147n1
Schmeller, Thomas 99n1
Schmidt, Carl 89–90
Schmidt, D.H. 235
Schmidt, Karl Matthias 14n36, 196n2
Schnelle, Udo 99n1

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access

Schott, Jeremy M. 161n5, 161n6
Schrage, Wolfgang 25n78, 44n124
Schreiner, Thomas R. 9n10, 28n91
Schumacher, Thomas 53n152
Sedley, D.N. 179n69, 179n71, 179n72, 190n20
Seeliger, Hans Reinhard 76
Sellin, Gerhard 12n21
Simms, A. Ernest 229–32, 234
Smith, Terrence V. 114n64, 137n35, 284n9, 296
Soards, M.L. 15n39, 99n3
Sommer, M. 106n35
Spicq, Ceslas 53n154
Spitta, Friedrich 234, 253n123
Starr, James M. 45n127, 261n5
Stephens, Mark B. 41n112
Sterling, Gregory E. 179n69, 180n78, 186n101
Stone, Michael E. 183n87
Strecker, Christian 53n152
Stuhlmacher, Peter 64n187
Suciu, Alin 120n85
Swete, H.B. 225n40

Talbert, Charles H. 136n27
Tardieu, M. 115n68
Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. 18n51, 77–79, 85, 87n53, 211
Titrud, Kermit 264n23, 264n24, 265n25, 266n28
Tomlin, R.S.O. 90n73
Towner, Philip H. 138n37
Trobisch, David 64n188, 151, 298
Trumbower, Jeffrey A. 81n20, 192n127
Tuckett, Christopher M. 34n100, 251
Tzamalikos, P. 179n73

Ueberschaer, Nadine 51n146
Unnik, W.C. van 89–90
Usener, Knut 36n105, 84n38, 104n22

Vögtle, Anton 11n20, 63n184, 109n43, 209n36
Vanderkam, James C. 175n54, 175n55
Vinzent, Markus 87, 299

Waßmuth, Olaf 88
Waldherr, Gerhard 90n71
Wall, Robert W. 148n1, 149n5, 150n7
Wand, J.W.C. 140
Warfield, Benjamin B. 128–34
Watson, Duane F. 12n25, 261n5
Webb, Robert L. 261n5
Weinel, H. 228n50
Werdermann, Hermann 136
Wevers, John William 177n63
Wilson, Stephen G. 79n12
Windisch, Hans 5n158, 131n17, 136n26
Winston, David 171n42
Wischmeyer, Wolfgang 76
Wrede, William 109n44
Wurst, Gregor 119n82

Zmijewski, J. 10n13

Jörg Frey, Matthijs Dulk, den, and Jan van der Watt - 978-90-04-39954-9
Downloaded from Brill.com11/09/2020 12:05:24PM
via free access